

No-that's too pessimistic

LAWRENCE SUMMERS

Plus

What spies should see

JOHN SAWERS, JOSHUA ROZENBERG

What students don't want to hear

FRANK FUREDI

Poles vs Romanians:

London's hidden turf wars

BEN JUDAH

Can Arabs and Jews ever live together?

GERSHOM GORENBERG, BRONWEN MADDOX

Cheap fake drugs are killing medicine

ELIZABETH PISANI

The ghost of Empire

TRISTRAM HUNT

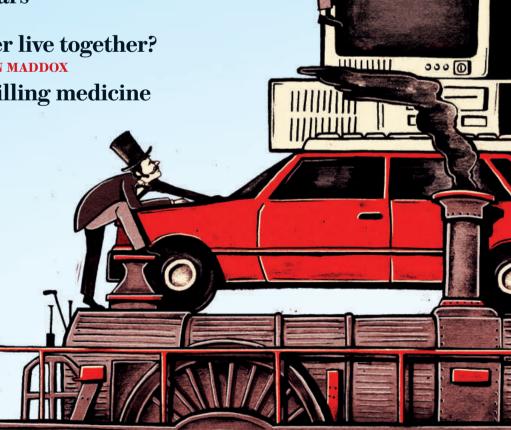
The joyless radical left

PHILIP HENSHER

Also

Sameer Rahim, David Goodhart, Wendell Steavenson, Yuan Ren, Anatole Kaletsky, Peter Kellner, AC Grayling, Catriona Kelly







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Competition with more choice and lower fares.

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BRITAIN WINS

HEATHROW

ILLEGAL

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Foreword

Too gloomy by half



I'm not the only one to read Robert Gordon's judgement on American growth (p26) and to be entranced by the knowledge he conveys of the fabric of his country, and at the same time to be unconvinced by the conclusion that we've reached the end of growth. Larry Summers, in reviewing *The Rise and Fall of American Growth*, says as much too (p31).

The debate whether Gordon is wrong and if so, why, matters. Gordon, an economist at Northwestern University, has written consistently for years that we have had the best of the great technological leaps forward and that those who say

that the digital revolution has yet to yield its prize fruits tend to be a) employed by Silicon Valley and b) allowing boosterism to trump data. One challenge, as Summers says, is to the quality of the data on productivity. There are very few people who wouldn't accept that they can do far more in every dimension of life thanks to the digital revolution; if figures do not show that—and there is no denying that wages, in real terms, have been flat for decades—then there is a sense that they are missing something. In the future, the revolution that big data is bringing to genetic analysis and medicine is just getting under way. Whether we should take as bleak a view as does Gordon of productivity matters to our estimates of future wages and living standards. Anatole Kaletsky will pick up the question in the next issue.

This month, Anatole shows how cheap oil is good for us but he is alarmed by China's economic weakness (p16). On p20, Yuan Ren takes issue with a clichéd set of accusations about China's one-child policy.

Meanwhile Peter Kellner, in important new polling (p14) which adds considerably to *Prospect*'s writing about the challenges of an ageing society, and has relevance far beyond Britain, shows how much people fear being put into social care, and yet how ill-equipped most feel for old age—and for paying for it.

John Sawers (p34), the former MI6 chief, warns that the encryption which keeps us safe helps terrorists and criminals too, while Joshua Rozenberg (p36) argues that the Investigatory Powers Bill will be welcomed by spies. Frank Furedi (p42) lambasts those students imposing a new censorship; universities should stop indulging them—and they should grow up, he says. Tristram Hunt (p58) also takes issue with "Rhodes rage"—Oxford students wanting to tear down statues of the imperial magnate—musing on how the Empire lingers on.

Although the new violence between Israel and the Palestinians takes them no closer to peace, the "two state solution" is still the least bad goal, says Gershom Gorenberg (p46). Diplomacy in the Middle East was never easy, though, notes Ian Irvine in The Way We Were (p88). Meanwhile, those migrants streaming from the Middle East, Africa and Central and Eastern Europe into Britain find themselves tossed about in London's roiling melting pot; Ben Judah (p52) reveals a side of the capital its longtime residents barely glimpse.

Branner Maddox



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The Prospect app—updated and improved

Prospect is offering you an upgraded version of our app for this issue, featuring a mobile-friendly reader in addition to the magazine replica.

With text that fits perfectly to your device, we hope that this development helps you to enjoy *Prospect* on-the-go.

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If I ruled the world

Ruby Wax

Teach children to cope with the pressures of modern life

f I ruled the world, I'd introduce a way of teaching kids to deal with real bullies, their own self-abusive emotions and how to cope with high stress levels. The competition in schools is pretty intense these days. Right now children are being hot-housed in preparation for exams. But no one's asking how much they can take before they burn their little brains out from the pressure. I'd also teach them self-knowledge and a bit about how the brain works. Knowledge is power. They could be graded on self-awareness just as they are academically.

These days we're always comparing ourselves to one another. We are all interconnected in some way, yet we still feel lonely. It's a problem. Now, because of social media, we're all living in extended groups which include models and celebrities. This is why so many kids feel inferior and have low self-esteem because they can never win against those odds.

Empathy is also a big part of this, but I don't know if you can teach that—in many ways we're always at war with each other. Our natural state is warmongering because we're still partly animal (it's not that hidden most of the time—look around you). So it's hard to force people to be compassionate. I'd encourage

me to keep that voice at bay.

Before mindfulness, people had ways to make themselves feel safer and less isolated. There was the church, the community or family support with some wise old grandmother around to dole out wisdom. Now, we don't seem to have those kind of accoutrements.

These techniques can be helpful at work as well. When people think they're debating something in a meeting and it's getting heated, they should remember that memory is the first thing to fail when you're under intense stress. You're not going to get any creative thoughts, let alone any normal ones. Rather than get angry it would be better to hold up a white flag and say: "Can we have this meeting in five minutes?" I think a lot of time and energy would be saved—as well as a few heart attacks. That doesn't mean you should always be calm because you would turn into a vegetable, but if you learn to cool your engine you can really push it when you need to get back into the fray.

You have to practise this. You have to be disciplined, like an athlete. You need to recognise when you're getting stressed and learn to send your focus into your body. The minute

> you focus in on your self, the ruminating mind quiets down. The more you practise, the more proficient you become at using it. You can't just wish it away. You can't say, "be happy."

> > I'm about to open walk-in centres for people needing help to cope with stress. Three times a week, the Arts Theatre in London, where I'm performing my new show, is letting me to do walk-in meetings where the public are invited in free. During the sessions they can meet with a team of experts from the mental health charity Sane to get their questions answered and to get help.

After my show closes on 13th February, I'll be piloting walk-in centres across the country with Marks & Spencer, as part of their programme Spark Something Good. Wish me luck.

We'll all need it.

I'll just be serving cookies and tea.

Ruby Wax's "A Mindfulness Guide for the Frazzled," is published by

It is possible to achieve this through techniques such as cognitive therapy and mindfulness. Mindfulness is simply teaching someone to pay attention to stop themselves getting dragged into endless internal loops of: "I can't, I'm not good enough, I'm a fraud..." Mindfulness takes down the commentary. It doesn't eliminate it completely, but it takes that selfimposed stress down. Mindfulness is, in fact, already taught in schools. The kids learn to recognise their stress and then are able to lower their cortisol level which can be the cause of many physical and mental diseases. If a child can learn to regulate and tolerate his emotions, he will do better in life.

it, but there's no rulebook.

Learning mindfulness is a very slow process. I still have days when I'm haunted by obsessive thoughts and get overanxious. Those are part of my nature. But rather than say to myself, "You're failure,"

using mind-

fulness helps

Penguin

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Prospect recommends

Things to do this month

Art

Performing for the Camera

Tate Modern, 18th February to 12th June

Ever since its invention, the camera has provoked performance. Far from recording what is really there, photography eagerly conspires to confound reality with fiction. One of photography's inventors, Hippolyte Bayard, staged his own Self-Portrait as a Drowned Man in 1840, aggrieved by Louis Daguerre's greater glory. Here, Tate Modern celebrates photography's liaison with performance, with over 500 images spanning 150 years. There are records of performance art—Yves Klein's Leap Into the Void (1960) and the provocative 1960s performances of Yayoi Kusama and Niki de St Phalle. Sometimes the performance is invented solely for the camera, as in the surreal and lusciously lit Marker Cones, 1982, by Jimmy De Sana, a key figure in New York's bohemian downtown scene in the late 1970s and 1980s. Fictional identities are another strand-from Man Ray's portrait of Marcel Duchamp as Rrose Sélavy (1921) to Samuel Fosso's African Spirits (2008), where the artist photographs himself as Martin Luther King and Miles Davis.

Betty Woodman

ICA London, 3rd February to 10th April

Betty Woodman, now 85, started working with clay in 1950. Since then she has experimented continuously, working with clay's most characteristic form, the vessel, and more recently painting, combining materials as unlikely as lacquer paint on earthenware and terra sigillata on paper. Granted a solo retrospective at the Met in New York in 2006, this first UK public exhibition of her work focuses on the expansive pieces she has made since then.

The Rhubarb Triangle and Other Stories by Martin Parr

Hepworth Wakefield, 4th February to 5th June

This is the first major survey show of this Yorkshire-born photographer since 2002, featuring some



"Surreal and lusciously lit": Jimmy De Sana's Marker Cones (1982)

of his most renowned series from throughout his career—from early black-and-white photographs of rural communities to his recent investigations of consumerism across the world. The themes labour and leisure, industry and consumption—are drawn from his present commission for the Hepworth, The Rhubarb Triangle, examining the early forced rhubarb industry in the triangle of countryside between Wakefield, Morley and Rothwell in West Yorkshire.

Emma Crichton-Miller

Theatre

The Master Builder

Old Vic, 23rd January to 19th March Ralph Fiennes, a great and vocally gifted stage actor, follows last year's tremendous performance as George Bernard Shaw's Jack Tanner in Man and Superman with Henrik Ibsen's Halvard Solness, a self-made master builder trapped in a loveless marriage when he meets a radiant young girl, Hilde Wangel, who exploits his passion for her with an avenging ruthlessness. The play, almost indecently symbolic, is a late masterpiece based on Ibsen's own emotional

experiences. It has been the province of actors as dynamic as Laurence Olivier or as tragically diffident as Michael Redgrave and Alan Bates, Will Fiennes steer a middle course? Old Vic director Matthew Warchus has commissioned a new adaptation by David Hare, and has cast the experienced American stage and screen actress Linda Emond as Solness's wife and rising Australian star. Sarah Snook, as his sexual nemesis. "Unhappy love," said Ibsen, "is when two people who love each other get married and feel they don't suit each other and cannot live happily together." No one felt this more keenly than Ibsen, and no one has written about it with such merciless ferocity.

Ma Rainey's Black Bottom

National Theatre, 26th January to 18th May

August Wilson's powerful play about the American black music industry is set in a 1927 Chicago recording studio. The National did the play in 1989 in its smallest auditorium; Dominic Cooke's revival in the larger Lyttelton features the extraordinary Sharon D Clarke as the legendary blues singer Ma Rainey who's arrived to cut her "Black Bottom" disc

exactly the way she wants it, whatever the producers are planning.

A Midsummer Night's Dream
Royal Shakespeare Theatre,
Stratford-upon-Avon, 17th February to 5th March, and on tour

The Royal Shakespeare Company is marking 400 years since William Shakespeare's death with his most popular play, co-produced with amateur companies from all corners of the country. The amateurs play Bottom and his wheatrical group ("hard-handed men in Athens here,") Who never beloweed in their minds till now." most popular play, co-produced laboured in their minds till now"). In Stratford, the amateurs come from Kidderminster and Stratford itself, in Yorkshire from the Leeds Arts Centre and so on. This sounds like a genuinely interesting experiment, as well as a good PR exercise in taking the Shakespeare away from his shrine and out to the people. Michael Coveney

Classical

Renée Fleming Artist Spotlight

Barbican, 5th and 6th February, and 6th April

This year the Barbican turns its annual Artist Spotlight on the soprano Renée Fleming. A Grammy Award-winner crowned the nation's "reigning diva" by the Washington Post, Fleming is an old-school star with contemporary edge-her CV includes the Super Bowl alongside the Metropolitan Opera. Fleming's three 2016 Barbican appearances include a solo recital of Richard Strauss and Robert Schumann songs, a public masterclass with Guildhall students and-most excitingly-the UK premiere of Anders Hillborg's richly-textured orchestral song cycle Strand Settings, composed for Fleming in 2013. The cycle was a hit at its Carnegie Hall premiere, showing this multifaceted soprano at her very best.

Aurora Orchestra: A Musical Memory-Palace

St George's Bristol, 5th February and Southbank Centre 7th February Part-concert, part mind-experiment, this programme is just

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Does religion do more harm than good? Newcastle: 16 February

Is true religion always extremist? Belfast: 3 March





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FURTHER EVENTS IN THE FAITH SEASON:

Religion and the senses in Ancient Greek culture London, Tuesday 2 February

Rogier van der Weyden and the encounter between faith and art (*British School at Rome*) London, Monday 7 March



Languor: Dakota Johnson and Ralph Fiennes in A Bigger Splash

the latest exciting product of the Aurora orchestra's wide-ranging and unorthodox musical imagination. Nicholas Collon's musicians will be joined by Ed Cooke, a Grand Master of Memory, to explore questions of memory and the mind (with some audience participation promised, too). Afterwards, Aurora will perform Mozart's angst-charged Symphony No 40 from memory, putting theory into thrilling musical practice.

Chilingirian Quartet: Quartets for the End of Time

Sam Wanamaker Playhouse, 22nd February

London's newest concert venue is also one of its oldest. The interior of the Globe's intimate Sam Wanamaker Playhouse is pure Jacobean fantasy, lit only by candles. It's an extraordinary setting for music, whether baroque or contemporary. This performance, one of the highlights of this season, puts the historical setting in chilling friction with two 20thcentury works, each composed inside prison camps-Olivier Messiaen's shattering Quartet for the End of Time and Edgar Bainton's Op 26 String Quartet. Performed by the veteran Chilingirian Quartet, this promises to be a performance that moves and unsettles in equal measure.

Alexandra Coghlan

Film

A Bigger Splash

On release from 12th February
If the premise of the Mediterranean holiday villa with a quartet
of related creative types seems
familiar, it's because A Bigger

Splash plays both on the 1969 film La Piscine, as well as Hockney's 1967 painting with its mysterious trace of the diver who has just disappeared into the azure water.

Mystery and eroticism suffuse the sudden confrontation of a rock star (Tilda Swinton) with her past. As she recuperates from a throat operation in the company of her younger lover (Matthias Schoenaerts) on Pantelleria, the rocky island south of Sicily, her sometime manager Harry (Ralph Fiennes) and his provocative daughter (Dakota Johnson) arrive to disrupt the idyll. Director Luca Guadagnino and writer David Kajganich have taken the charged cross-currents of the original film and made of them something more intense-contemporary, witty yet never distant. It's sexy, too, in many moods from languor to anger.

The finely-tuned quartet of performances is inevitably dominated by Fiennes as Harry. He boasts, he dances, he bores as only a rock veteran can. And the joy of this beautiful-looking film is its unpredictability. Just when you think you're sinking arthouse reverie, it pivots entertainingly in another direction. Smart scheduling for the grey days of February.

The Survivalist

On release 12th February

Somewhere in Europe, sometime in the near future, after an energy catastrophe, a lone subsistence farmer suddenly finds two women (one young, one older) at his door. What will they do to make him take them in and share the chance of survival that his meagre supply of viable seeds afford? This atmospheric debut

from writer/director Stephen Fingleton combines persuasive characterisation with driving narrative and a distinctively poetic take on nature, as both threat and promise.

Janis: Little Girl Blue

On release from 5th February
There's been no shortage of music documentaries in recent months and this detailed account of Janis Joplin's life and work by Amy Berg hardly proves an innovation. Nor is the arc of her creativity and decline a surprise. Yet Berg's sensitive investigation into the pain behind those powerful, vulnerable performances, enhances the

extensive use of performance foot-

age, including from the 1967 Mon-

terey Pop Festival. It's a great

celebration, too. *Francine Stock*

Opera

The Magic Flute

ENO London Coliseum, 5th February to 19th March

Having kept Nicholas Hytner's family-friendly production of The Magic Flute in the repertoire for two decades, English National Opera crossed over to the dark side in 2013 with Simon McBurney's replacement. The Théâtre de Complicité director took the enigmatic elements of WA Mozart's final opera and shook them up, revelling in its mysteries. The result is an awesome vision, part Arthurian romance, part Brothers Grimm yet wholly Mozart. The most surprising aspect of this production was not the extraordinarily inventive visual effects, created through a combination of live action and video animation, but McBurney's detailed attention to the music and singing. He raises the orchestra out of the pit to participate in the action on stage and furnishes the characters with outlandish elements-the Queen of the Night becomes a wheelchairbound crone and Monostatos an east end gangster. A strong cast includes Allan Clayton as Tamino, Lucy Crowe as Pamina and James Cresswell returning in the role of Sarastro.

II Trittico

Royal Opera House, 25th February to 15th March

Giacomo Puccini's triptych of oneact operas is a variegated delight. It ranges from the lowlife tragedy of *Il tabarro* to the joyfully funny *Gianni Schicchi* (the one that contains the eternally popular "O mio babbino caro") with the solemn religious ecstasy of Suor Angelica in between. It was beautifully revived by Richard Jones, who takes liberties with the staging but delivers an outstanding hat trick that illustrates the composer's versatility to perfection.

Figaro Trilogy

Welsh National Opera, Wales Millennium Centre, 13th February to 25th February

Welsh National Opera explore the character of Figaro through three operas—Gioachino Rossini's *The Barber of Seville*, Wolfgandf Amadeus Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro* and *Figaro Gets a Divorce*. The last is the world premiere of a commission from Elena Langer and David Poutney who have created a sequel to Mozart's work and speculated on life after separation for one of the most enduring figures in opera.

Neil Norman

Science

Leonardo da Vinci: The Mechanics of Genius

Science Museum, 10th February to 4th September

One of history's greatest painters was also a gifted draughtsman. Leonardo da Vinci, attuned to the beauty of mathematics and engineering, started sketching cranes and machinery while jobbing at a workshop in Florence cathedral. Many drawings anticipated contraptions to come centuries later, including helicopters and diving gear. Thirty-nine of his imagined machines—brought to life by Milan craftsmen to celebrate da Vinci's 500th birthday in 1952—are brought together with games and interactive installations.

Building a Climate Laboratory

Royal Institution of Great Britain, 26th February

The Paris agreement in December reminded us that climate change is one of our biggest global challenges—but predictions are based on computer-climate models that are little understood. Dame Julia Slingo, Chief Scientist at the Met Office, will explain the processes that affect the climate and show how they are incorporated into forecasting models.

Anjana Ahuja



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Prospect events

Thursday 4th February Jonathan Dimbleby

Join *Prospect* for an evening with broadcaster and writer Jonathan Dimbleby (below), where he will discuss his new book, *The Battle of the Atlantic*. He tells the story of the decisions that led to victory through diaries and letters from leaders and sailors.

6pm, *Prospect* offices, 2 Queen Anne's Gate, London. To buy tickets, please visit: www.prospectmagazine.co.uk/events



Monday 8th February JRF Poverty Lecture with Ruth Davidson MSP

Join *Prospect*, the Joseph Rowntree Foundation and Ruth Davidson, leader of the Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party and MSP for



Glasgow, for our third Annual Poverty Lecture.

Tuesday 1st March
Cyberattack—the

It will focus on life chances and the pursuit of opportunity in the $\Pi \Pi$

6pm, The Royal Society of Medicine, London. To reserve your place, please visit:

www.prospect-magazine.co.uk/

Monday 22nd February The *Prospect* Book Club

Prospect is launching a book club which will meet on the third Monday of every month. See below for details of the first meeting.

Book Club events will also take place on 21st March, 18th April, 16th May and 20th June.

Thursday 25th February Sir John Sawers

Join *Prospect* for a talk by Sir John Sawers (below), former Chief of the Secret Intelligence Service (MI6), on the threats facing the west.

6pm, Prospect offices, 2 Queen Anne's Gate, London. To buy tickets, please visit: www.prospectmagazine.co.uk/events



Tuesday 1st March Cyberattack—the threat to our financial system

Jonathan Evans, the former Director-General of the British Security Service (MI5), will talk on the threat of cyberattacks to UK financial institutions. Followed by a panel discussion chaired by Bronwen Maddox, *Prospect*'s Editor, with Mark Boleat, the Chairman of the Policy Committee at the City of London.

A limited number of places will be available to readers. To register your interest, please email: events@prospect-magazine.co.uk

This event is supported by AIG.

Wednesday 9th March Theresa May: The Security of our Nation

Bronwen Maddox in conversation with Theresa May, Home Secretary.

A limited number of places will be available. Please check the *Prospect* website and the next issue of the magazine for more details.



Tuesday 10th May Robert Gordon

Join *Prospect* at its London offices for an evening with Robert Gordon,

leading economist, where he will discuss his new book, *The Rise and* Fall of American Growth: The U.S. Standard of Living since the Civil War.

6pm, *Prospect* offices, 2 Queen Anne's Gate, London. To buy tickets, please visit: www.prospectmagazine.co.uk/events

Thursday 26th May-Sunday 5 June Hay Festival

Prospect will again have a stand at the Hay Festival in Wales. The Hay Festival celebrates great writing and great ideas to transform our way of thinking.

To register your interest, please email: events@prospectmagazine. co.uk. For more information on the Hay Festival, please visit: www.hayfestival.com/wales

Thursday 26th May-Sunday 5 June How The Light Gets In

Prospect staff will appear on several panels at the How The Light Gets In festival in Hay.

For more information on How the Light Gets In, please visit: www.howthelightgetsin.iai.tv/

Party Conferences 2016

Prospect will host fringe events at the Labour Party Conference in Liverpool, from 25th to 28th September, and the Conservative Party Conference in Birmingham from 2nd to 5th October.

For more information, or to discussing working with *Prospect* at the conferences, please email david.tl@prospect-magazine.co.uk

Launching in February—The Prospect Book Club

Starting on Monday 22nd February at 6.15pm, and taking place on the third Monday of every month, *Prospect* is offering the chance to discuss the best new books with our editorial staff and likeminded readers at our London office.

The first title will be *Times* columnist David Aaronovitch's memoir about his communist parents, *Party Animals. Prospect*'s Editor Bronwen Maddox and Arts and Books Editor Sameer Rahim will chat to Aaronovitch, and the audience is encouraged to read the book beforehand and to join the debate. To buy tickets, please visit: www.prospectmagazine.co.uk/events



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Letters

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Robots rule

Giles Wilkes ("Are only poets safe?," January) describes the thesis of the book *The Future of the Professions* as "audacious." The claim is not new, let alone audacious: since the 1970s at least there have been predictions of how automation and artificial intelligence would replace white as well as blue collar work. The internet and big data are now making that a reality.

For decades, the American Medical Association has resisted the fact that, for example, robots can cut better hip replacement sockets than surgeons. Slowly, the conspiracy that many professions represent is having to give way. If the NHS were not so backward in non-medical technology, its financial problems would be far smaller.

A gap in our thinking about the future of radical automation can be captured in two Marxist terms: the withering away of the state (as automation replaces bureaucracy) and the elimination of most "alienated" labour in a world where unskilled labour has little or no place. The growing consensus around a state-wage-for-all funded by higher, rigorously enforced corporate taxation may be the only solution.

Yorick Wilks, professor of Artificial Intelligence, University of Sheffield

IS is OK

Both Anthony Grayling and Bronwen Maddox ("The Power of Words," January) miss the most telling argument for avoiding the name "Islamic State." This is that use of this term implicitly endorses that group's view of itself as the epitome of Islam, and tends to create a divide between Muslims and non-Muslims in our own society.

Words have powerful associations and I'm sure it is harder for a Muslim to declare hostility to "Islamic State" than to Daesh. Meanwhile, the term lends support to views that it is an extension of Islam (rather than a pathological distortion), and that the wider Muslim community thus bears some responsibility for its actions.

The choice of alternative term

is less critical. Even the abbreviation IS creates some distance from the potent psychological trigger represented by the word "Islamic."

John Hodgson, via email

No poor tax

Gisela Stuart writes ("Cruel and unusual times," December) that "helping the poorest... can be done in two ways: by increasing benefits or by looking at the cost of things which disproportionately affect less well-off people." There is a third way: the reduction or elimination of those taxes to which they are subject—for example, VAT.

As James Meek points out in his book *Private Island*, taxes take some 8.7 per cent of the income of the poorest. Jeremy Corbyn may prefer a more progressive tax regime, but the impartial observer gets the impression that Labour and the Conservatives have a tacit agreement to ensure that wealth continues to flow to the elite.

John Alexander, via email

Footloose French?

Lucy Wadham ("This is our struggle, not yours," January) refers to young French people as a "generation of well-travelled 'digital natives," who "have studied abroad on Erasmus programmes" and "are unafraid of globalisation."

But these are children of the elite. Most young people in France have not experienced foreign travel and study abroad. They are aware of globalisation because of the devastating effects it has had on their families and communities.

This is another example of the metropolitan elites having no understanding of *La France profonde*. *Rita Kilcourse*, *via email*

Time for "People's QE"?

David Willetts's review of Adair Turner's book ("Time for radical change," January), argues that we are "getting to the limits of the system's capacity to absorb QE." In truth, of course, the Bank of England stopped Quantitative Easing (QE) quite some time ago, while other major central banks have shown that it can be taken further. QE does not prevent the

reduction of public debt—quite the opposite, as it reduces yields and cuts the cost of servicing the debt and hence reduces the deficit that needs to be financed every year.

In this low inflation environment Turner is right to argue for fiscal expansion when needed, a sort of "People's QE," given that we can no longer rely on cutting interest rates to give us growth.

Vicky Pryce is Chief Economist at the CEBR and co-author of "It's the Economy Stupid"

Reopen euro debate

The article "Twelve things you need to know about Brexit" (January) is a useful summary but its authors fall into the populist trap when they refer to "the eurozone's manifest failings" and "leav(ing) a stable currency union for one which is beset by problems." The eurozone is not a single country but a group of countries which have agreed to share a currency. Making such an agreement work

Making such an agreement work is obviously difficult but it brings huge benefits. Greece has been unable to adapt thus far and other members have struggled. However, the northern members, including Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium, Austria, Ireland, Finland and Luxembourg—against which we should compare ourselves—have benefitted and are all wealthier than we are.

I have a simple question to put to you and your readers—why is Germany so much wealthier, less unequal, more export competitive, and better able to manage its finances and balance its external account than the UK?

Peter Howard, via email

Erratum

Umberto Eco rightly points out ("If I ruled the world," December) that "young people need to be taught to filter and question the information they receive through the internet." As should we all.

His story of the general who conquered the Indian province of Sindh and sent a one-word telegram to London—*Peccavi*, or "I have sinned" in Latin (get it?)—is sadly not true.

Michael Towsey, via email

In fact

Only 11 per cent of Republicans approve of President Barack Obama's executive order to pardon two Thanksgiving turkeys instead of one. In contrast, 59 per cent of Democrats and 28 per cent of independents approve. Public Policy Polling, 23rd November 2015

Luxury homes in London are typically twice the price of their equivalent in Manhattan. The cost of a large family home in Knightsbridge averages $\pounds 2,194$ per sq ft compared to $\pounds 1,196$ per sq ft on the Upper East Side.

Independent, 1st December 2015

Twenty per cent of women have entered into a long-term relationship after office Christmas parties, with one on seven still with the same partner.

Marie Claire, 30th November 2015

Spotify's most played song ever is "Lean On," by Major Lazer & DJ Snake (with MØ). It has been played more than 526m times worldwide. Releaseed in March 2015, it only reached number two in the UK. Guardian, 12th November 2015

George Lucas has "assidiously avoided the Internet since 2000—no Facebook, no Twitter, no email." Washington Post, 27th November 2015

Fifty per cent of employees in the United States admit to internet shopping at the office. Most likely to shop are salespeople (63 per cent), financial services workers (62 per cent) and IT staff (57 per cent). Fortune, 1st December 2015



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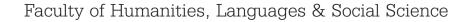












Opinions

Peter Kellner

The great social care dilemma

How will the government meet the needs of an ageing population?



As a public policy challenge, social care is one of the most fraught facing the government. As we live longer, more of us will need it. But how should we pay for it? Should the state raise taxes to help everyone—or keep taxes down and insist that people pay for as much of their own social care as possible?

However, it is no less awkward as a personal prospect for people who have not yet retired, as they contemplate the perils of what to do if they can no longer live independently. YouGov's latest survey for *Prospect* finds that our views are informed by a remarkable chasm between two sentiments: the first is that today's over 70s are generally regarded as comfortably off by their own children; the second is that many of those same children fear that they, themselves, will fall off a financial cliff should they need help in their later years.

This fear may explain why, along with recent horror stories in the press, so few of us fancy the idea of ending up in a care home. Only 1 per cent of us say this is what we want if we can no longer look after ourselves. Put bluntly, many of us are petrified that we could end up both broke and badly treated.

According to the Office for National Statistics, just under 300,000 people over 65 live in a care home. That is 3 per cent of this age group. Our survey's figures are consistent with this. We polled 1,199 people under 60. Just under half of them have a parent over 70. Four per cent of these have a parent in a care home.

In contrast, fully 82 per cent of these parents live independently in normal housing. Of the rest, the majority live either in sheltered housing or with their children—our respondents. And financially, these over-70s

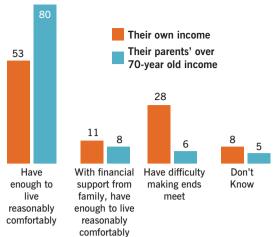
are mostly in good shape. As many as 80 per cent of our respondents say their elderly parents have enough money "to live reasonably comfortably"—a figure that rises to 88 per cent when we include parents who receive financial support from their family.

In contrast, only 53 per cent of all Britons under 60 say that they themselves have "enough to live reasonably comfortably." Official statistics confirm that the average income of pensioners has risen significantly more than the national average in recent years. That does not mean the problem of pensioner-poverty is cured. Our survey excludes over-70s without children—they may well face greater challenges, including over money. But the point remains: as long as their own care costs don't rocket, most older people live reasonably comfortably.

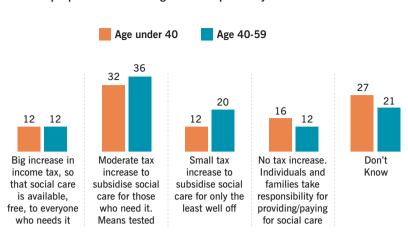
The problems come when we look over



How the under 60s view their income %

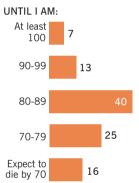


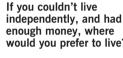
Overall, which of these policies would you prefer regarding the cost of social care for older people who can no longer live independently? %

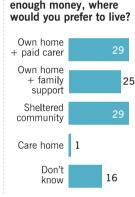


How people under 60 view their later years %

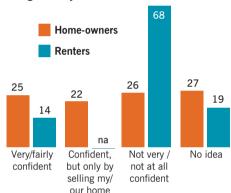
How long do you expect to live?



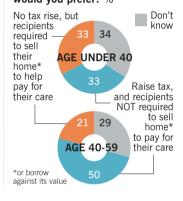




How confident are you that you will have enough money to make that choice? %



Which government means test for subsidising social care would you prefer? %



the cliff edge. In our survey, just 19 respondents have a parent in a care home. It's too small a group to be sure of an accurate reading; but it's a sobering indicator that only seven of them say their parents have enough money to live comfortably.

How, then, do the under-60s contemplate their own old age? Their figures for life expectancy look pretty hard-nosed. Six out of 10 expect to live until they are least 80, two in 10 until they are at least 90.

We then asked our sample of under-60s how they would prefer to live if they could no longer live independently and had enough money to make the choice. We offered five options. Three were chosen by broadly equal numbers: at home with a paid carer, at home with the support of family, or in a sheltered community with care provided. A mere 1 per cent chose social care.

Had the figure been, say 10 to 15 per cent, one might attribute the finding to a predictable preference among most people to stick with places and people who are familiar. But I have never seen a personal choice win such little support. It suggests something far closer to dread, as distinct from a reasonable but marginally less attractive option.

Part of the dread relates to cost. We know that social care is expensive. And only a minority of people are confident that they will have the money to choose the post-independence life they would like to lead. Just one in four homeowners expect to have enough, though the figure almost doubles if they include the cash they would raise by selling their home. That means half of all homeowners are either not confident of having enough money, even if they sell their home, or aren't sure.

The prospects for people who rent are much worse. Only 14 per cent expect to have enough money to make the choice (and that includes a fair number of younger adults who don't currently own their own home but expect to do so in future). As many as 68 per cent of renters are not confident they will be able to afford the choice.

This brings us back to government policy. If the cost of caring for older people is going to become increasingly expensive, as life expectancy continues to rise, how should it be funded?

The most popular option is a moderate increase in taxes, so that "subsidised social care is available to most people who need it, subject to a means test." Of supporters of the four main Britain-wide political parties, only Ukip voters disagree: their most popular option is "no increase in income tax so

that individuals and families take responsibility for providing, or paying for, social care."

As for the vexed issue of whether to force homeowners to sell their home (or borrow against its value) to help pay for their social care, the idea holds little appeal to the over-40s. Only 21 per cent back the idea, while 50 per cent would prefer taxes to rise to allow people to hold on to their housing equity.

The dilemmas facing ministers are clear. The present government has protected many of the benefits for the over-65s from the austerity of recent years. They (actually—interest declared—we) enjoy free prescriptions, winter fuel allowance, free bus travel and a state pension that has been rising faster than wages. Those of us who are still working are exempt from paying national insurance, while the over-75s don't need to pay for their television licence.

Politically, the thought is perhaps heretical; but in social and economic terms, is there a case for rebalancing the package?. That would mean that some of the support for comfortably-off pensioners is diverted to help meet the rising costs of providing high quality social care for the growing minority who need it and can't afford it.

Peter Kellner is President of YouGov

Anatole Kaletsky

The time to "fix the roof" has come

The Budget gives George Osborne the chance to build on his mantra



A "dangerous cocktail" of economic turmoil in China and collapsing oil prices now threatens Britain's economic and government policies, according to George Osborne. But the strange thing about these two risks is that they both require a response exactly opposite to the one the Chancellor promised: determination to stick to the government's pre-existing economic plans come hell or high water.

Luckily, Osborne's record of politically adroit U-turning suggests that he may already understand this, and in fact plans to do the opposite of what he promised. If China really does descend into chaos this will provide a perfect excuse to suspend fiscal targets that were going to be missed anyway and instead ease up on austerity, while declaring more loudly than ever that "there is no alternative" to the abandoned targets. And if oil prices stay at their present rock-bottom levels this will create a golden opportunity to reconsider some of the government's misguided priorities on tax and spending, while claiming that the original decisions were the right ones in the different circumstances that were prevailing when they were made.

China is a mystery wrapped in an enigma and will probably muddle its way through its present problems, as described here two months ago; but a Chinese collapse, though it remains unlikely, is a genuine threat to the world economy-and would have to be met with the opposite of the policies Osborne advocated in his "dangerous cocktail" speech. Austerity would have to be replaced with fiscal stimulus, near-zero interest rates would have to be continued for longer and Conservative euro-sceptics would have to abandon their fantasy about trading China as a substitute for Britain's natural inter-dependency with the European Union.

The implications of a collapsing oil price are even more at odds with the Chancellor's apparent views. Cheap oil, far from being a mortal danger, is an unqualified blessing for the British economy and could be an even greater boon to the government.

Contrary to stockmarket lore, falling oil prices do not portend a global economic downturn. On the contrary, every global recession since 1970 has been preceded by a sharp rise in the price of oil. And almost all of the previous occasions when oil prices have fallen by 40 per cent or more have been followed by sharp accelerations in global growth: in 1985-86, 1992-93,

1997-98 and 2001-02. The most spectacular instance of the oil price acting as a contrary indicator of economic activity was also the most recent and should surely have stuck in the Chancellor's mind. In the year leading up to the global depression of 2008, the oil price trebled, from \$50 to \$140. It then plunged back from \$150 to \$40 in the six months that immediately presaged the global economic recovery of 2009-10.

A convincing economic explanation exists for this negative correlation between oil prices and global growth. Each year the world burns about 34bn barrels of oil, which means that every \$10 fall in the oil price shifts \$340 billion from oil producers to consumers. Thus the \$70 price decline of the past 18 months will redistribute about \$2.3 trillion annually to oil consumers, providing a bigger income boost than the com-

"Osborne's record of politically adroit U-turning suggests that he plans to do the opposite of what he promised"

bined fiscal stimuli of the United States and China in 2009. Oil consumers eventually spend their extra incomes, although it may take them a year or so before they fully appreciate the windfall. Meanwhile the oil-producing governments which collect over 80 per cent of global oil revenues usually keep spending, first by running down financial savings and then by borrowing for as long as they can. That, after all, is what comes naturally to most politicians, especially when they are fighting wars, like Saudi Arabia, or defying geopolitical pressures, like Russia. The net effect of the enormous income redistribution to consumers from oil producers should therefore be to accelerate global growth, as has always happened after oil has collapsed in the past.

So what does all this imply for Britain and George Osborne? While a crisis in China is a genuine and potentially catastrophic risk, it is unlikely to materialise in the year ahead. The Chinese authorities, despite their many false moves since last summer, have the necessary policy instruments to prevent an orderly slowdown degenerating into an economic collapse. And in the unlikely event that the Chinese

authorities do seriously mismanage their economic restructuring, Britain has plenty of scope to protect itself by easing up on fiscal austerity and delaying any moves to raise interest rates.

Meanwhile, and regardless of any threats from China, the collapse of oil prices is now an accomplished fact that creates immediate opportunities to improve economic performance and government policy.

If Osborne is serious about strengthening government finances, he should take advantage of falling oil prices in his next Budget to increase duties on petrol, especially on diesel. Even more importantly he should restore the automatic annual escalation of fuel duties by 3 to 5 per cent above the rate of inflation. This permanent and automatic "fuel duty escalator" was the Major government's most effective instrument for repairing public finances after the 1992-93 financial crisis. The next Budget would also be an ideal opportunity to abolish the winter fuel allowance for pensioners—and then observe the political impact.

If the removal of this inequitable and patronising handout to pensioners were greeted with support from the public, rather than the backlash dreaded by Tory politicians, it could act as a precedent for a desperately needed shift in Britain's government spending priorities away from affluent elderly voters towards the genuinely needy and the working poor.

Such a rebalancing of spending and revenues—steadily increasing energy taxes and gradually reducing pensioner handouts—is a much more plausible mechanism for permanently improving Britain's public finances than unsustainable cuts to core public services or Osborne's gimmicky tax reforms.



"We like to keep him unavailable for comment"



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The confluence of events in China and global oil markets gives Osborne an opportunity to raise energy taxes and abolish fuel subsidies, while easing the government's existing austerity programmes. Such a combination of measures would strengthen the

economy, increase work incentives, promote social justice, restore Britain's leadership in environmental technologies and transform the long-term prospects for public finances. Here, finally, is a genuine chance for Osborne to inject some substance into his

mantra about "fixing the roof while the sun is shining."

Next month's Budget would be the perfect time to start.

Anatole Kaletsky is Chairman of the Institute for New Economic Thinking

Bronwen Maddox

Cheap oil won't bring peace

But it might move Putin's focus away from Ukraine

"If oil falls to \$20 a barrel, Russia will look to get out of Syria. We won't be able to afford it." One Russian government adviser on the conflict took a gloomy view of his country's financial resilience—but one that might seem to suggest that cheaper oil will raise the chance of a ceasefire.

If only. The apparently endless slide in the oil price is just one nagging thought—and far from the most important—in the minds of ministers in Russia, Saudi Arabia and Iran, the main countries in what has become a proxy war fought out through roaming bands of jihadists whose identity and allegiances constantly shift and reform. Their actions are shaped far more by old, deep rivalries and modern calculations of power.

But to the extent that oil does play a part, it's hard to see that it will be on the side of peace. Alright, there is the reminder embedded in that remark from the Russia adviser that the war is expensive and the oil price has left them strapped for cash. But if all three of those big players want the price higher, and the most likely reason it will rise is outright conflict between them—for which they have endless opportunities—then it's hard to see that cheap oil leads to peace.

It's hard to remember that oil (taking the price of Brent crude, one of the benchmarks) reached \$145 a barrel in July 2008, and was around \$112 in mid-2014. Since then it has lurched down, to around \$32 now. Goldman Sachs and Morgan Stanley are both reckoning it could reach \$20, driven by China's weakness and the dollar's strength.

As Anatole Kaletsky describes above (p16), cheap oil has been an unalloyed blessing for the countries which import it, a positive shock, in economic jargon, tempered only by the disruption it may have brought to their plans for renewables or fracking which suddenly look less appealing. For the big oil producing countries most entangled in Syria, it has been an unexpected economic blow which has followed other causes of real social and political strain.

Iran, following the summer's deal on its contested nuclear programme, has been liberated from some (but by no means all) international sanctions, and is scrambling for every penny of sales that it can get. It has been pleading with other members of Opec to "make way" for its growing sales, so far to little avail. Russia needs, according to officials, at least around \$55 a barrel a day to "break even" on the government budget; some estimates put the real figure far higher.

Saudi Arabia, in some ways, has shown the most dramatic response even though the immediate threat is small. It has stuck to its policy of pumping whatever it takes to keep up its market share, regardless of price. Even though it is being forced to draw down the foreign reserves it has built up over a decade, it still has more than \$600bn, although the International Monetary Fund warned in October that it could run out of financial assets within five years if it maintained its spending.

That is why its response is so interesting. On the one hand, it has maintained the assertive policy against Iran in Yemen conflict that is dangerously close to being a direct military clash between the two nations. The funding that emanates from Saudi Arabia-if not always from the government—also flows to anti-regime rebels in Syria who, whatever their allegiances, are on the opposite side from the forces of President Bashar al-Assad, who is backed by Iran. These are the twin stages on which the old Sunni (Saudi) and Shia (Iran) rivalries of the region are now being acted out. Many see in the willingness to become involved in armed conflict outside Saudi Arabia's borders the hand of Mohammed bin Salman. the Saudi prince in his early thirties who is Defence Minister, second in line to the throne, and running much of the country's policy.

At the same time, the country has embarked on a shakeup of its economy which is striking for its modernity; it could have come out of the pages of IMF recommendations. Subsidies on fuel products in the kingdom—a clinical phrase for the national view that Saudis shouldn't have to pay more than a token for anything made from the "black gold"—are being cut. National oil companies may be privatised, with outside investors invited in. Most



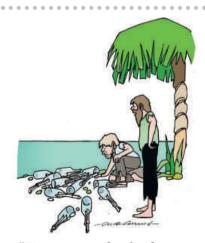
ambitious, perhaps, there are signs that the regime recognises the urgent need to create an economy based on something other than oil, not least to give jobs. Two thirds of the 29 million people are under 30, youth unemployment is between 25 and 30 per cent, and many even if educated lack useful skills for 21st century work.

Given the demographic pressures, it may be too little, too late. The kingdom used to boast that it achieved "progress without change," one of my favourite ever promotional phrases. The danger now—as it has long feared—is that it will achieve change, even upheaval, without progress.

And so back to Syria: yes, from one view, the low oil price might encourage three countries which have better things to do to withdraw. But from another, they see in each other's vulnerability a chance to grab power; none wants to be the first to withdraw. And each knows that any direct conflict, particularly between Iran and Saudi Arabia, pushes the price higher, if only by a few dollars.

Where the Russian adviser's musings might have more force, however, is in Ukraine. The best effect of oil heading for \$20 would be if it quelled any further ambitions President Vladimir Putin might have in that country.

Bronwen Maddox is Editor of Prospect



"We seem to get a lot of junk messages at this time of day"

Sam Tanenhaus

Obama's biggest frustration

America has 357m guns in circulation—and a fetish for weapons



Of the many ideological standoffs in the Barack Obama years, the battle over gun ownership may well expose the sharpest divisions in the American public—and within the recesses of the national psyche. "My biggest frustration," Obama has said, "is the fact that this society has not been willing to take some basic steps to keep guns out of the hands of people who can do just unbelievable damage." That was in June 2014—a year before a white supremacist massacred black worshippers in a church in Charleston, South Carolina; 18 months before the terrorist shootings in San Bernardino, California.

The new year began with another bleak episode, this one resembling a low-budget Hollywood western: armed "militiamen" seized control of a federal building at a wild-life refuge in rural Oregon. While authorities sifted through the dismal options—take on the outlaws and risk bloodshed? Do nothing and encourage anarchy?—Obama promised to enact mild gun-control restrictions via "executive actions." This averted a showdown with Congress he would almost

certainly lose, as he did in 2013, when the gun-control bill drafted after a gunman killed 20 schoolchildren in Newtown, Connecticut seemed sure to pass the Senate but was instead defeated.

Meanwhile, gun sales are brisk. A Congressional Research Service report calculated that in 2009, there were around 310m guns in the country—and that therefore, America had more guns than people. The Washington Post estimates that there are now 357m guns in circulation. And sales reliably spike after each new murderous episode and each new backlash. Most of the weapons belong to one large segment of the population, white and rural, which also happens to be the Republican base, shrinking in numbers but increasing its stockpiles.

This fetish for weapons, and fear of even minimal regulation, mystifies much of the world and confounds many Americans, too. As many as 80 per cent of the National Rifle Association (NRA) support gun-control measures, including the background checks Obama has been calling for, which would keep guns out of the hands of the mentally

ill. Yet the NRA resists every new law.

Why? Because its constituency isn't really the 4.5m members, the wholesome, outdoorsy "mums and dads and sons and daughters" it claims to have. It is instead the hidden players in the gun debate—Springfield Armory Inc, Beretta USA Corporation, Sturm, Rugar & Co, Smith & Wesson, and other manufacturers which since 2005 have poured as much as \$52m into the NRA and funded more than \$20m of its advertising and marketing.

The money has been well spent. NRA lobbyists are geniuses at changing the subject from public safety to Constitutional freedom. They do this by reinterpreting the 2nd Amendment, which states "A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed."

For most of American history this was read as a protection of the rights of the separate states to muster militias for the common defence in the event of invasion, a useful provision given the Founders' reluctance to form a federal standing army.

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Ruth Davidson MSP, is the Leader of the Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party and MSP for Glasgow





The interpretation that "the people" meant ordinary citizens was described in 1990 by conservative former Supreme Court Chief Justice Warren Burger as "one of the greatest pieces of fraud, I repeat the word 'fraud,' on the American public by special-interest groups that I have ever seen in my lifetime." Richard Nixon, who nominated Burger, wanted to make handguns illegal, and his fellow California Republican Ronald Reagan—who was shot and wounded in an assassination attempt in 1981—supported background checks as well as limits on automatic weapons.

But gun advocates stayed on the case, and gradually brought other conservatives with them. The climactic constitutional moment came in 2008 when the Supreme Court, under the George W Bush appointee John Roberts, ruled that the amendment actually does apply to citizens. Even so, it did not confer the "right to keep and carry any weapon whatsoever in any manner whatsoever and for whatever purpose." In other words, the feds can regulate guns just as they do so much else, from cars and drugs to aerosol emissions and baby toys.

But since then, Republicans have been enlarging the reach of gun owners. On 1st January an "Open Carry bill" came into effect in Texas; licensed handgun owners can now display their weapons in most public places. Governor Jim Abbot, who signed the law, celebrated with a display of target practice at a shooting range outside Austin, the state capital. Austin is also the site

of the University of Texas's main campus—and the scene of what is often called the first sniper mass murder, in August 1966, when Charles Whitman shot 14 people from the clock tower. Today, under another new Texan law, students are permitted to take concealed weapons into classrooms and dormitories, just as they can in seven other states.

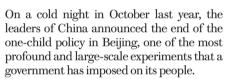
The irony is that the fetish for gun-ownership may indeed weaken Constitutional order as an exasperated Obama, in the last year of a presidency in which gun massacres have become a common occurrence, resorts to executive fiat—taking the law in his own hands, just like the heroes of the Wild West.

Sam Tanenhaus is an American writer. His next book will be a biography of William F Buckley Jr

Yuan Ren

One for all

A new book on China's one-child policy fails to deliver



My generation is not the only product of the one-child policy. For many, the policy, which came into effect in China in 1980, has already dictated their family structure. People don't just start reproducing when the state says they can. Some of my older friends wanted more children, but now they mostly say they've long given up on the idea.

Mei Fong's new book *One Child: The Story* of *China's Most Radical Experiment* gives a worthy overview of the policy. Fong, a former *Wall Street Journal* China correspondent, ranges widely across modern Chinese society, from the Sichuan earthquake to the foreign adoption of baby girls.

Yet the author's ambition for scope is partly to blame for the book's downfall. *One Child* is at points insightful, particularly with first-hand interviews, such as in the story of Yicheng, a city where a two-child policy was "secretly" trialled for decades. But the narrative fails to deliver the same momentum in other areas, parroting widely used arguments from the western media in a way that lacks intellectual curiosity. Oversimplified assertions are made and at times, the book wanders off into loosely associated topics (for example, the far-fetched attempt to link the growing sex doll industry to the lack of real women).

What is missing is a fresh perspective on how facts and figures could be interpreted given China's rapid evolution and complex social reality. The book also failsto delve into the cultural mindsets and attitudes, particularly of those hardest hit by the policy: China's women

Fong pitches the one-child policy as a cold-hearted calculation by leaders thought up with little reference to reality, or regard for side effects. The latter may have been true. Yet it is also worth considering the predicament that the country faced in the 1970s.

As the author acknowledges, the nation had been flung from one disastrous policy to another in the preceding decades. Each policy experiment was the brainchild of Chairman Mao—and each had gone terribly wrong. The Great Leap Forward (1958-60), an attempt to modernise the economy by industrialisation and collective agriculture, resulted in famine and a death toll estimated at up to 45m people. Its devastation was so inconceivable that my grandfather refused to believe the stories from his home province of Henan, the worst affected region.

A few years later, in the Cultural Revolution (1966-76), Mao attacked traditional and bourgeois elements of Chinese society and urged its youth to impose ideological purity. Thus a beleaguered people shattered its own social order—students beat up teachers, children were pitted against their parents, and spouses turned on each other.

And on population, Mao's policy was "the more people, the stronger we are." The population doubled in size between 1949 and 1978 to nearly 1bn people. The import of contraceptives was banned and the fertility rate peaked at six children per woman.

By the time of Mao's death in 1976, the country was mired in poverty. A ballooning population was threatening—in the eyes of both China's new leaders and foreign scholars, who predicted a demographic time bomb—to plunge China back into darkness.

The precursor to the one child policy, "Late, Long and Few" (wan, xi, shao) halved population growth in the seven years from 1969. This campaign encouraged people to marry later and space out births. It is often championed as a less brutal alternative that would have worked given enough time.

Yet in reality, force and coercive tactics were already at play. Women with two children were pressurised to abort pregnancies, even late in term. And despite such measures, the impact of the campaign petered off at around three children per woman in a case of diminishing returns.

In 1979, the population was still growing at 1.2 per cent annually. Still reeling from Mao's upheavals, China's leaders didn't have the patience—or perhaps the guts—to wait it out. The country shifted first towards a voluntary one-child model. There were initial signs of success, but in China, offspring are considered a security net, meant to support their parents in old age, and society refused to bend further. So the draconian one-child policy was imposed (rural families could often have two children) for the 35 years.

Today, one of the biggest problems stemming from the one-child policy is China's gender imbalance—there are around 119 boys born to every 100 girls, the result of gender selection. These figures are alarming and demographers have long predicted that the surplus of men will lead to increasing violence and instability. Yet so far, there is little evidence of increased crime.

In *One Child*, Fong looks at the phenomenon of "bachelor villages," in which men struggle to find wives. These are a favourite journalistic case study—but a flawed one.



There are gender gaps in villages because many young women leave to work in the city. The empowerment of women is the real culprit, as it is behind much of the narrative on gender imbalance. Highly educated women in cities actually struggle to find husbands.

Attributing a rapidly ageing population and diminishing workforce to the one-child policy is also unfair. The goal of birth control policies was to reduce population growth—drastically and quickly. Success of any kind would inevitably come at the cost of a balanced demographic. Many observers, however, fault the policy for making decline

happen too fast, while simultaneously claiming that alternative policies would have cut population growth more effectively.

The more relevant question is why the policy persisted for so long, given the foreseeable issues. Clearly the leadership was not willing to tweak anything that would jeopardise China's "miraculous growth" until recently. In a farcical attempt to loosen control in 2013, the government allowed couples to have a second child if either one of them was an only child. This was not only arbitrary, but it effectively punished rural couples for decisions their parents made, which, ironically, were likely

made with state approval.

Restrictions on family size remain. But so far, a tenth of the predicted numbers of families have applied for a second child. Ultimately, restrictions should be removed entirely.

In the future, if I have only one child, my child will have no cousins or siblings. China not only needs more children for the next generation's wellbeing, but women need to be given back the reins on reproduction. Only then will the modern Chinese family begin to reinvent itself.

Yuan Ren is a writer based in Beijing

AC Grayling

Judgement and prejudice: a fine line

Regardless of how quickly we judge someone, we should be ready to revise our opinion



There is a distinction between a snap judgement about a person, and a prejudice held against that person. The former is made in the first moments of meeting; the latter needs to be formed before meeting to be a genuine prejudice. This distinction matters because whereas prejudice is unacceptable, snap judgements seem to be the psychological norm.

Empirical work by a pair of psychologists, Alexander Todorov and Janine Willis, ten years ago at Princeton University established two things: that "first impressions" take about a tenth of a second to form, and that they are hard to efface thereafter. For the person about to have a job interview, this is rather daunting news. But is not just employment prospects that turn on first impressions: social and romantic prospects hinge on them too

It is well known that people communicate by a variety of non-verbal means, and indeed might give information about themselves which is more accurate than, or at odds with, the information they verbally offer. Subliminal cues are transmitted by body posture, hand gestures, direction of gaze, blinking, size of the pupils, and more; and of course how people dress, and whether they have detectable breath or body odour, also influence reactions.

The Todorov-Willis work, published in *Psychological Science* in July 2006, was based on the following experiment: a series of photographs of faces was shown to a group of people individually, who were asked to judge them for five traits: attractiveness, likeability, trustworthiness, competence and aggressiveness. There was no limit to how much time the participants could take to look at the photographs and form their judgements. The pictures were then shown to different groups for a tenth of a second, half a second, or a full second, these participants likewise

being asked to rate the faces for the same five characteristics. Judgments formed in a tenth of a second were highly correlated with the judgments made by the individuals who could take as much time as they liked. Giving the participants half a second or a full second made no difference to the degree of correlation.

Interestingly, the most highly correlated judgement related to trustworthiness, followed by attractiveness. The researchers suggested that an ability to make flash judgements about people on the basis of their facial appearance has evolutionary significance as a survival trait.

This work controverts the clichéd view that first impressions are formed within the far longer but still brief period of seven seconds. But even this more generous allotment might seem improbable: is it really judgement and not merely first impressions which is meant here? A sceptic might suggest that both the one-tenth of a second theory and the seven-second theory might be adequate for the former, but could it be that judgement properly so called is a different thing? It often happens that the impression one forms on the basis of what people look like can instantly be transformed when one hears them speak—and even more when one registers what they are saying-and the eye-blink of a first impression leaves out of account those other factors people need to complete a picture of a new acquaintance: age, occupation, family status, social and even political views.

The sceptical view might be reinforced by the fact that anyone who frequently interviews job and student applicants knows that initial opinions more often than not change as an interview proceeds. But there is a response to this. Interviews are conducted because a fit is being sought for a given position, and one can judge that someone is trustworthy and

likeable without also thinking that they have that fit: here a different judgement is at issue. The one about trustworthiness and the rest was obviously made earlier; how could it be change that occurred otherwise?

Whether judgements happen in seven seconds or a tenth of a second, it is evident that first impressions are speedily enough arrived at, but this should occasion no surprise. People are quick to recognise objects as belonging to categories—living or inanimate, stationary or moving, and so on-and it might be that this speed of categorisation especially applies to social interactions because of their importance, making us highly sensitive to the appearance of others and how to interpret it. The same applies to recognising others' moods-it takes very little time to spot happiness or rage, and the ability to do this quickly is doubtless of evolutionary advantage.

The important point to make, however, is that it would be wrong not to stand ready to revise first impressions, whether positive or negative, if subsequent information suggests that we should. To do otherwise would be to turn snap judgment into something worse than prejudice.

AC Grayling is a philosopher and Master of the New College of the Humanities



"Sorry Larry, you are Mr. Right, but not Mr. Right with stock options"

The Duel

Should we have a sugar tax?



Ministers are looking at putting a tax on sugary drinks to curb obesity in Britain. Conditions such as Type 2 diabetes are straining health budgets. Would a tax on sugar help?

Many years ago as an 18-year-old, YES Many years ago as an III Bound School at Loitokitok in Kenya. My group consisted of five strapping African girls, one rather weedy Indian (me) and our American volunteer leader. We spent a never-to-be-forgotten fortnight, charging around on the plains and the slopes of a then unspoiled Kilimanjaro. As we tearfully said goodbye to each other, our leader presented us with a farewell present, a single Mars bar each. This was a luxury, the rarest of treats. I vividly remember cutting mine into five neat pieces, indulging in one immediately, and carefully wrapping the others to be savoured over the following days.

Why do I inflict this piece of nostalgia on you? To point out that though Mars bars, or fizzy drinks, are not necessary for health and wellbeing, I, along with many others, like them a lot. And like the truffles and foie gras that I also have come to enjoy, they should be expensive and occasional indulgences. This is possibly the most important purpose of a sugar tax: redefining unnecessary products as treats to be had sparingly.

Today bad food and drink are all too often cheap food and drink. Low prices and pervasive advertising have inspired false beliefs ("a Mars a day, helps you work, rest, and play") and led to sugary, fizzy drinks being consumed routinely. Hiking up the cost would help place these items in the category marked "occasional pleasure" rather than "everyday expectation." When I was growing up in the tropics, the vendor at the school gates had ripe guavas, small green mangoes dusted with chilli, and sour Victoria plums sprinkled with salt on his barrow. They tasted delicious, were healthy, and we kids could afford them. Good food should be affordable and bad food expensive.

Obesity is a global problem as complex and politically charged as climate change. Yet by sticking to the evidence we have just managed to negotiate an international climate agreement. To tackle obesity, and the horrendous chronic diseases it causes, we must similarly follow the facts.

You are quite right that we should redefine unnecessary snacks, like chocolate bars, as treats. But is tax the best way to do it? I have no problem with the state intervening in somebody's choices where those choices have a direct impact on someone else's wellbeing—or even on their own, where the evidence shows that they do not

fully understand these impacts. Changing behaviour is difficult, and tax is a blunt instrument.

Studies show that a 20 per cent UK tax on sugary drinks would cut consumption by 15 per cent and the number of obese adults by 180,000, or 1.3 per cent. This may or may not make the tax worth it-but I would argue not. It might seem that making things more expensive makes them appear luxurious, so people will consume them more sparingly, but the evidence does not support this. Marketers routinely make products more desirable by hiking the price, and I doubt their intention is to reduce sales. (Consider the lager once branded as "reassuringly expensive.") Yet price rises don't always boost perceived value. Tobacco, fuel and beer are all taxed heavily. Do consumers now consider them luxuries? Of course not. Reducing smoking has taken decades of education, legislation and social change. Still, one Briton in five chooses to smoke.

Changing mindsets is key and individual psychologies are complex things. Our psychological biases can affect decisions which might seem disconnected but actually may compound one another. It is no accident that people who eat badly also tend to smoke, do less exercise and not invest in pensions. This could be explained by a tendency to discount the distant future at a

much greater rate than the near future.

For me the evidence is clear. Tax if you wish, but don't let us delude ourselves that this will lead to a meaningful change in behaviour. We need a better understanding of the motivations that lead to bad choices and evidence of plans that work by appealing to these motivations. The carrot is better than the stick—and the chocolate bar.

YES If the evidence is not clear, this is in part because the questions haven't been clearly defined. To say sugar taxes don't work raises the question: work on what? A sugar tax may not achieve a statistically significant reduction in obesity, but this isn't really the ideal outcome measure. The focus on excess body weight has come about because it can be measured easily and very closely correlates with poor health.

Reducing the consumption of sugary drinks is good, raising revenue is good—if put to wise use—and protecting children, who are vulnerable to the actions of adults, is not an assault on personal freedom, but a duty of the state. So the arguments against a sugar tax don't stack up, and certainly to cite job losses, discrimination against the poor, and judgementalism, as some anti-tax commentators have done, is just nonsense.

A sugar tax alone is not the answer, only part of a wider, as yet inadequately defined solution that the world desperately needs. Ultimately this may well involve combinations of regulatory, fiscal, medical, educational and societal measures to stimulate changes in behaviour, alter satiety thresholds and educate taste perceptions. Consumption must not exceed energy expenditure, and healthy living encompasses more than food and drink. But above all, we must focus on prevention, primarily in fetal life, infancy and childhood.

The question remains: would a sugar tax have a big enough impact to justify its introduction? In my view it would not. The data I cited suggests that at least one marker of poor health, obesity, would not change much. But other aspects of health could get worse. In his review on social and health inequalities, Michael Marmot, a professor of epidemiology and public health at University College London, showed that health follows a social gradient: the poorest individuals will die ten years earlier than the richest. He also showed that the poor pay the largest proportion of their income in tax due to the blind tyranny of indirect taxes. I would be extremely cautious about adding to their tax burden. Making the poor poorer might even damage their health.

I agree that it is a government's duty to protect young children and the most vulnerable. I am no classical libertarian: I believe in justifiable government intervention. Tax is not exactly a zero-sum game, but there

are always winners and losers. Jobs might be lost as a result of a sugar tax. This would only be acceptable if the impacts of the tax have countervailing benefits. This isn't nonsense—it is evidence-based policy making.

Unfortunately, just focusing on a sugar tax diverts attention away from other steps to improve people's health. The reasons why people choose to accept poor health are complex. Poverty is one, but there are physiological and psychological reasons too. If we can understand these we can encourage people to make better food choices. We could reformulate foods not only to take out unhealthy nutrients but to make healthier options more appealing in both taste and satiety. We could redesign environments-the supermarket, the staff canteen—to encourage healthy choices. Moving sweets away from the checkout is an excellent example. This type of intervention is far less controversial than a tax and therefore more likely to lead to progress.

YES Let's take these points in turn. First the suggestion that a tax on sugar-sweetened fizzy drinks would add to the financial "burden on the poor." Through low prices and advertising the food industry has persuaded vulnerable people that fizzy drinks are an essential part of a daily diet, when they are wholly unnecessary. A price rise should be accompanied by the information that no one needs them; if you don't buy them you will have more money, not less.

Second, a tax will lead to job losses? This is the self-same argument trotted out by the tobacco industry. Jobs change as societies evolve. Would we encourage heavy smoking in order to create jobs? Of course not; the challenge for the food industries, to which they have thus far failed to rise, is to make their profits and sustain their workforce from healthy products.

Third, a sugar tax is "controversial"? Public Health England estimates 77,000 lives and £15bn in NHS expenditure are likely to be saved over 25 years by reducing the nation's sugar intake. Let's talk about "evidence" too. There have been a number of comprehensive, impartial reviews (for example, reports by the World Health Organisation and Public Health England in 2015 and the McKinsey Global Institute in 2014). All concluded that a sugar tax is likely to reduce consumption. It isn't controversial, just sadly resisted by many.

Obesity may be a complicated issue, but this shouldn't be an excuse for inaction. We need globally co-ordinated, long-term national programmes using multiple approaches that lead from primary research and evidence generation and synthesis, to implementation of promising interventions and long-term evaluation of effectiveness. Magic bullets don't exist, but a sugar tax is absolutely part of the solution.

We began by agreeing that we need to change the perception and status of unhealthy food, including fizzy drinks. Since then we have exchanged several hundred words without agreeing on much. But finally we have agreed that we need better evidence on programmes which encompass multiple interventions. In fact, all of the reports that you cite conclude that taxes are only part of the solution.

Regrettably, our dialogue reflects the national debate about how we improve diets. We agree that something must be done, that we need multiple interventions and then we go head-to-head on the intervention about which we probably have most evidence.

You suggested that the range of possible measures could include education. This is a great example of an area where we are beginning to collect evidence. Intervening with children is a good idea. Food consumption is very habitual and establishing good habits early is key. There are some good, evidence-based, ideas emerging as to how schools can encourage healthy eating (take a look at smarterlunchrooms.org). We need to find out how they impact in the longer term and whether are different interventions more appropriate for different people.

So let's move on from arguing about a sugar tax. Let's start pushing for that globally co-ordinated programme to gather the evidence on other ways to encourage people to eat more healthily. I also think that it is critical that we carry the food industry with us. Like it or not, they are key to delivering a solution and they differ from the tobacco industry in one important respect: they are agnostic about whether they make money from selling healthy or unhealthy foods.

Neena Modi is Professor of Neonatal Medicine at Imperial College London and President of the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health Richard Tiffin is Professor of Applied Economics at the University of Reading



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Growing pains

The extraordinary technical innovations of the past century are unlikely to be repeated ROBERT J GORDON

n the century after the end of the Civil War, life in the United States changed beyond recognition. There was a revolution—an economic, rather than a political one—which freed people from an unremitting daily grind of manual labour and household drudgery and a life of darkness, isolation and early death. By the 1970s, many manual, outdoor jobs had been replaced by work in air-conditioned environments, housework was increasingly performed by machines, darkness was replaced by electric light, and isolation was replaced not only by travel, but also by colour television, which brought the world into the living room. Most importantly, a newborn infant could expect to live not to the age of 45, but to 72. This economic revolution was unique—and unrepeatable, because so many of its achievements could happen only once.

Economic growth is not a steady process that occurs at a regular pace. Instead, progress is much more rapid at certain times. There was virtually no economic growth for millennia until 1770, only slow growth in the transitional century before 1870, remar kably rapid growth in the century ending in 1970, and slower growth since then. My thesis is that some inventions are more important than others, and America's growth in the century after the Civil War was made possible by a clustering, in the late 19th century, of what I call the "Great Inventions."

Since 1970, economic growth has been dazzling and disappointing. This apparent paradox is resolved when we recognise that recent advances have mostly occurred in a narrow sphere of activity having to do with entertainment, communications and the collection and processing of information. For the rest of what humans care about—food, clothing, shelter, transportation, health and working conditions both inside and outside the home—progress has slowed since 1970, both qualitatively and quantitatively.

Our best guide to the pace of innovation and technological progress is total factor productivity, a measure of how quickly out-

put is growing relative to the growth of labour and capital inputs. Since 1970, that has grown at barely a third the rate achieved between 1920 and 1970. My chronicle of the American standard of living rests heavily on the history of innovations. But any consideration of the future must look beyond innovation to contemplate the headwinds that are slowing the vessel of progress. Chief among these is the rise of inequality, which since 1970 has steadily directed an ever larger share of the spoils of the growth machine to the top of the income distribution.

The idea that a single 100-year period, the "special century," was more important to economic progress than any other so far, goes against the theory of economic growth as it has evolved over the last 60 years. Growth theory features an economy operating in a "steady state" in which a continuing inflow of new ideas and technologies creates opportunities for investment.

But this model does not apply to most of human history. According to Angus Maddison, the great historian of economic growth, the annual rate of growth in the western world from AD 1 to AD 1820 was a mere 0.06 per cent per year, or 6 per cent per century. Or, as summed up by the economic commentator Steven Landsburg: "Modern humans first emerged about 100,000 years ago. For the next 99,800 years or so, nothing happened. Well, not quite nothing. There were wars, political intrigue, the invention of agriculture—but none of that stuff had much effect on the quality of people's lives. Almost everyone lived on the modern equivalent of \$400 to \$600 a year, just above the subsistence level... Then—just a couple of hundred years ago—people started getting richer. And richer and richer still."

The designation of a "special century" applies only to the US, which has carved out the technological frontier for developed nations since the Civil War. However, other countries have also made stupendous progress. Western Europe and Japan largely caught up to the US in the second half of the 20th century, and China and other emerging nations are well on their way.

Progress did not suddenly begin in 1870, but the US Civil War (1861-65) provides a sharp historical marker. The first Census of Manufacturing was carried out in 1869; coincidentally, that year brought the nation together in a real sense, when the transcontinental railroad was joined at Promontory Summit in Utah.

Robert J Gordon is the Stanley G Harris Professor in the Social Sciences at Northwestern University. This article is an edited extract from "The Rise and Fall of American Growth: The US Standard of Living since the Civil War" (Princeton University Press)





 $Silicon\ Valley, where\ many\ believe\ that\ "software\ is\ eating\ the\ world."\ But\ have\ we,\ as\ Robert\ Gordon\ argues,\ already\ had\ the\ best\ of\ the\ revolution?$

Our starting point of 1870 should not be taken to diminish the progress made in the previous half century. A child born in 1820 entered a world that was almost medieval: lit by candlelight, in which folk remedies treated health problems and travel was no faster than hoof or sail. Three great inventions of that half century—the railroad, steamship, and telegraph—set the stage for more rapid progress. The Civil War showcased these advances when northern trains sped Yankee troops to the front and steamships blockaded supplies to the South. During the War of 1812, news still travelled so slowly that the Battle of New Orleans was fought three weeks after a treaty had been signed to end that war. But by the time of the Civil War, daily newspapers published the outcomes of battles mere hours after they occurred.

et's identify those aspects of the post-1870 economic revolution that make it impossible to repeat. We are so used to our creature comforts that we forget how recently they were achieved. In 1870, rural and urban working-class Americans bathed in a large tub in the kitchen after carrying water from outside in pails and warming it over an open hearth. All this was such a nuisance that some people bathed once a month. Similarly, heating in every room was once a distant dream—yet it became a daily reality in the decades between 1890 and 1940.

The flood of inventions that followed the Civil War transformed life. When electricity made illumination possible with the flick of a switch, the process of creating light was changed forever. When lifts allowed buildings to extend vertically instead of horizontally, the nature of land use was changed, and urban density was created. When small electric machines replaced huge, heavy steam boilers, the scope for replacing human labour with machines broadened beyond recognition.

So it was with transport. When cars and other motorised vehicles replaced horses, the quarter of agricultural land devoted to feeding those animals was freed up. Progress in transport has been stunning; it took little more than a century from the first primitive railroads which began replacing the stagecoach in the 1830s to the Boeing 707 flying near the speed of sound in 1958.

The transition of the food supply from medieval to modern also occurred during this century. The Mason jar, invented in 1859, made it possible to preserve food at home. The first canned meats were fed to Northern troops in the Civil War, and during the late 19th century a vast array of processed foods, from Kellogg's cornflakes and Borden's condensed milk to Jell-O, entered American homes. Clarence Birdseye invented a method for freezing food in 1916, although it took until the 1950s before people had domestic freezers. In 1870, shoes and men's clothing were bought from shops but women's clothing was made at home, and the sewing machine had only recently reached the mass market. By the 1920s, most women's clothing was bought from retail outlets that did not exist in 1870—namely, the great urban department stores and, for rural customers, mail-order catalogues.

Some measures of progress are subjective, but life expectancy and the conquest of infant mortality are quantitative indicators of the advances made in medicine and public health. Public waterworks not only revolutionised the daily routine of the housewife but also protected every family against waterborne diseases. The development of anaesthetics in the late 19th century made the gruesome pain of surgery a thing of the past, and the invention of antiseptics cleaned up the squalor of hospitals.

This century was unique not only in the magnitude of its tran-

sitions but also the speed with which they were completed. Not a single American household was wired for electricity in 1880. By 1940, nearly 100 per cent of US urban homes were wired, and 94 per cent had water and sewer pipes, more than 80 per cent had interior flush toilets, 73 per cent had gas for heating and cooking, 58 per cent had central heating, and 56 per cent had refrigerators. In short, the 1870 house was isolated from the rest of the world, but most 1940 houses were "networked," having the five connections of electricity, gas, telephone, water and sewage.

The "networked" house, together with modern appliances, changed the nature of housework. Women no longer had to devote long hours to doing laundry on a scrub board, making and mending clothing, and baking and preserving food, paving the way for their participation in the workforce. The improvement in working conditions for men was even more profound. In 1870, more than half of men were engaged in farming, either as proprietors or as farm labourers. Their hours were long and hard; they were exposed to heat in the summer and cold in the winter, and the fruits of their labour were at the mercy of droughts, floods and insect infestations. Working-class jobs in cities required 10 hours of work per day, including Saturdays. More than half of teenage boys were in work, and male heads of households worked until they were disabled or dead. But by 1970, the whole concept of time had changed, including the introduction of blocks of time that were barely known a century earlier, including the two-day weekend and retirement.

Thanks to these irreversible changes, in the half century after the Civil War America changed from an agrarian society of loosely linked small towns to an increasingly urban and industrial society with stronger private and governmental institutions and an increasingly diverse population. The urban percentage of the population, defined as those living in organised governmental units with a population of 2,500 or more, grew from 24.9 per cent in 1870 to 73.7 per cent in 1970.

The importance of the Great Inventions was on display in the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy, a freakishly powerful storm that devastated much of New York City and the coast of New Jersey in October 2012. Sandy pushed many of its victims back to the 19th century. Residents of New York City below 34th Street learned what it was like to lose the lifts that carried them to and from their apartments. Not only was vertical movement impeded, but the flooding of the subways, along with the blackout, eliminated the primary means of horizontal movement as well. Anyone without electricity also lost such modern inventions as lighting, air-conditioning and fans for ventilation, and refrigerators and freezers to keep food from spoiling. Many residents had no heat, no hot food, and no running water. Those living in New Jersey were often unable to drive as petrol station pumps could not function without electricity. Moreover, communication was shut off after batteries were drained on laptops and mobile phones.

So, what has happened since the special century ended in 1970? First, with a few notable exceptions, the pace of innovation has slowed. Second, rising inequality meant that the fruits of innovation are no longer shared equally: those at the top of the income distribution continue to prosper, but a shrinking share of the economic pie makes its way to the Americans in the middle and bottom of the income distribution.

Progress has been focused more narrowly in the areas of entertainment, communications and information technology. In these areas, change does not arrive in a great and sudden burst, as it did with the by-products of the Great Inventions, but it is evolutionary

and continuous. For instance, the advent of television in the late 1940s and early 1950s caused attendance in cinemas to plummet—but movies did not disappear. Instead, they increasingly became a central element of television programming, especially with the advent of cable television. Similarly, television did not make radio obsolete but rather shifted the radio from being the centrepiece of living room furniture into a small and portable device, most

"Air travel is less comfortable than before, making the experience more timeconsuming and stressful"

often listened to in the car. Nothing has appeared to make tele vision obsolete; instead, its technical aspects have become ever better, with huge, flat, high-definition screens becoming standard.

Landline telephones dominated communications from their invention in 1876 to the breakup of the Bell telephone monopoly in 1983. Since then, mobile phones have prompted an increasing share of households to abandon landlines. Information technology and the communication it enables have seen much faster progress since 1970. The transition from the mainframe computer of the 1960s and 1970s to the personal computer of the 1980s to the web-enabled PC of the 1990s to smartphones and tablets of recent years represents the fastest transition of all—but, again, this applies to a limited sphere of experience. Total business and household spending on all electronic entertainment, communications and IT (including purchases of TV and audio equipment and mobile phone service plans) amounted to only about 7 per cent of US gross domestic product in 2014.

specialties and out-of-season and organic produce. There has been no appreciable change in clothing other than in styles and countries of origin; imports of clothing have caused an almost complete shutdown of the domestic US apparel industry. The microwave oven has been the only post-1970 kitchen appliance to have a significant impact. Cars and trucks accomplish the same role of transporting people and cargo as they did, albeit with greater convenience and safety. Air travel is less comfortable than before, with seating configurations and increased security making the experience more time-consuming and stressful.

America's achievements since 1970 have been matched by most developed nations, but in one important regard the US fell behind, struggling with its healthcare system. Compared to Canada, Japan, or western Europe, the US combines by far the most expensive system with the shortest life expectancy. Progress in medicine has also slowed compared to the great advances made between 1940 and 1970, which witnessed the invention of antibiotics, the development of procedures for treating and preventing coronary artery disease, and the discovery of radiation and chemotherapy, still used as standard treatments for cancer.

Can we quantitatively measure the changes in American society since the special century began? Shown in figure 1 are the data for the standard of living, productivity, and hours worked per person from 1870, divided at 1920 and 1970. For each of the three periods there are three bars, each depicting the average annual growth rate over the respective interval. The left (orange) bar in each group shows the growth rate of per-person real GDP, the middle (blue) bar growth in real GDP per hour (that is, labour productivity), and the third (red) bar growth in hours worked per person.

There are two striking aspects to this data. The first is the symmetry of the graph: the first and last periods are almost ▶



identical in the height of each bar, but the middle period (1920-70) is quite different. Output per person growth is substantially higher in the middle period, and productivity growth is much higher—2.8 per cent per year compared to 1.8 per cent in the first period and 1.7 per cent in the last period. The much greater excess of productivity growth over output per person in the middle period, compared to that in the first and last periods, reflects the sharp decline in hours worked per person between 1920 and 1970. This raises two questions: why did hours worked per person decline so rapidly in the middle interval? And, did rapid productivity growth cause hours to decline, or did the decline in hours worked per person in some way contribute to relatively rapid productivity growth?

The decline in hours worked per person from 1920 to 1970 reflects numerous fac-

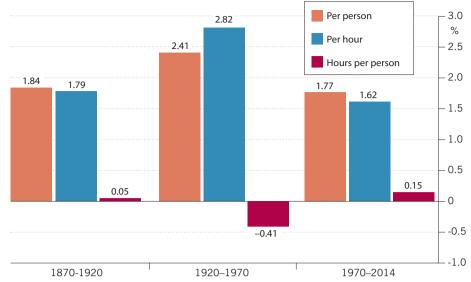
tors that all point in the same direction. First was the long-run decline in hours of work per week for production workers, which by 1920 had already declined from 60 to 52 hours per week. Second was the influence of New Deal legislation, both in reducing hours directly and also in empowering labour unions that fought for and achieved the eight-hour workday and 40-hour work week by the end of the 1930s.

An unrelated factor was the baby boom of 1947 to 1964, which increased the child population (those aged 0 to 16) relative to the working-age population (16 to 64) and thus reduced the ratio of hours worked to the total population. The reverse feedback from productivity growth to shrinking hours reflects the standard view in labour economics that as real income rises, individuals choose not to spend their extra income on goods and services, but rather opt for extra leisure—that is, by working fewer hours.

The change in hours worked per person in the first period (1870–1920) was negligible and presumably reflects modest declines in the working week for urban manual workers, offset by the effects of shifting employment from farms to cities, where working hours were longer and more regimented. The slight increase in hours worked per person after 1970 mixes two quite different trends. In the first portion of the interval, roughly between 1970 and 1995, hours worked per person rose as a reflection of the movement of women from housework into market employment. Then, after 1996, hours worked per person fell as a result of a steady decline in the labour force participation rate of prime-age males and of young people. After 2008, these labour force dropouts were joined by the retirement of the older members of the baby boom generation.

Why did labour productivity grow so much more quickly between 1920 and 1970 than before or after? We can divide the sources of the growth in labour productivity into three components, as shown in figure 2. The time intervals are the same as before, except that the absence of some data requires us to start at 1890 rather than 1870. Each bar is divided into three parts. The top section, displayed in red, is the contribution to productivity growth of rising educational attainment; these are the widely accepted estimates of Claudia Goldin and Lawrence Katz. The middle section, shaded in blue, displays the effect of the stead-

Figure 1. Annualised growth rate of output, 1870-2014



Source for figures 1 & 2: Taken from data compiled for *The Rise and Fall of American Growth:* The U.S. Standard of Living since the Civil War

ily rising amount of capital input per worker hour; a continuing source of rising labour productivity is the larger quantity of capital, of increasingly better quality, with which each worker is equipped. The effect of a rising ratio of capital input to labour hours is usually called "capital deepening."

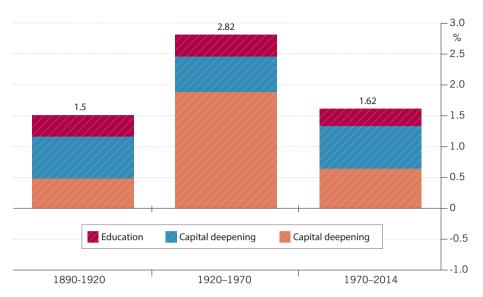
ur designation of the "special century" appears to conflict with the behaviour of total factor productivity growth as summarised in figure 1. Apparently only the second half of that period exhibited growth that was substantially above average. We can state this puzzle in two symmetric ways: why was total factor productivity growth so slow before 1920? Why was it so fast during the 50 years after 1920?

The leading hypothesis was put forward by Paul David, who provided an analogy between the evolution of electric machinery and of the electronic computer. In 1987, Robert Solow quipped, "We can see the computer age everywhere but in the productivity statistics." David responded, in effect: "Just wait," implying there could be a long gestation period between a major invention and its payoff in productivity growth. David counted almost four decades between Thomas Edison's opening of the Pearl Street power plant in Manhattan in 1882 and the subsequent upsurge of productivity growth in the early 1920s associated with the electrification of manufacturing. He attributed the delayed impact not just to the time needed to invent and perfect the machinery, but also to a sharp decline in the price of electricity itself.

David's analogy turned out to be prophetic, for only a few years after his 1990 article, the growth rate of aggregate US productivity soared from 1996 to 2004 to roughly double the rate it had been from 1972 to 1996. However, after 2004, when growth in labour productivity stopped its eight-year surge, despite the proliferation of flat-screen desktop computers, laptops, and smartphones in the decade after 2004. By way of contrast, in the 1920s, electricity's stimulation of industrial efficiency lasted much longer than eight years. Productivity growth soared in the late 1930s and into the 1940s, creating the remarkable average 1920-70 growth rate displayed in figure 2.

We might conclude that the electricity revolution was more important than the computer revolution. Moreover, the produc-

Figure 2. Average annual growth of output per hour and its components, 1890-2014



tivity upsurge after 1920 did not rely only on electricity, but also on the internal combustion engine. It is not surprising that motor vehicles had little impact on labour productivity or total factor productivity growth before 1920, for they had come into existence only a short time before. There were only 8,000 registered motor vehicles in 1900, yet there were 26.8m just three decades later, when the ratio of motor vehicles to the number of US households reached 89.2 per cent. Productivity in the aggregate economy depends in part on how quickly workers, including truck drivers and delivery personnel, can move from place to place. Just as the thousands of lifts installed in the building boom of the 1920s facilitated vertical travel and urban density, so the growing number of cars and trucks speeded horizontal movement on farms and in the city.

Knowing what we do about the past, what can we extrapolate

to the future? We cannot predict every new invention; indeed, even for those on the horizon, such as driverless cars and legions of small robots, their likely effect and importance is a matter for debate. But there is much that we can predict. For instance, the baby boom generation is currently aged between 50 and 68, so we can predict with reasonable accuracy the effect of its members' retirement within a percentage point or two, depending on how long many of them choose to work. If American high school students regularly rank poorly in international tests of reading, maths, and science, then a sudden spike in scores is improbable. If the stock market continues to advance, we know that inequality will increase, for capital gains on equities accrue disproportionately to the top income brackets.

My predictions that future growth will be slower than in the past are strongly

resisted by a group of commentators whom I call the "technooptimists." They tend to ignore the slow productivity growth of the past decade. Instead, they predict a future of spectacularly faster productivity growth based on an exponential increase in the capabilities of artificial intelligence.

Some economists dismiss pessimism out of hand. The economic historian Deirdre McCloskey writes that "pessimism has consistently been a poor guide to the modern economic world. We are gigantically richer in body and spirit than we were two centuries ago." Whereas McCloskey has room in her toolkit for only one rate of growth spanning the past two centuries, I put forward three separate growth rates over the past 150 years. Yes, we are "gigantically" ahead of where our counterparts were in 1870, but our progress has slowed, and we face stronger barriers to continued growth than were faced by our ancestors a century or two ago.

Not so fast

It's a mistake to think our children are condemned to economic stasis LAWRENCE SUMMERS

The Rise and Fall of American Growth:
The U.S. Standard of Living since the Civil War
Robert J Gordon (Princeton University Press, £27.95)

obert Gordon's *The Rise and Fall of American Growth* is an extraordinary work of economic scholarship. At a time when too much of the economics profession prioritises theorising about small issues, Gordon provides new

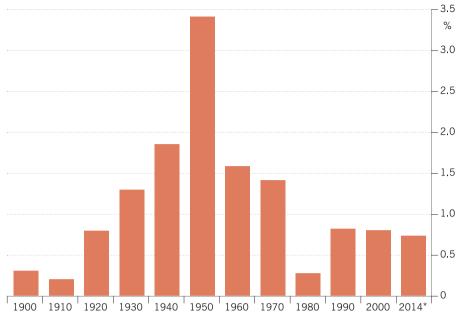
data bearing on what may be the most important economic question of all—what will economic growth be like over the next couple of generations? Moreover, this is one of the rare economics books that is on the one hand deeply analytical, with over 100 figures and tables, and on the other a pleasure to read: it is chock full of anecdotes about everything from flying out of Chicago's O'Hare airport in the 1970s to the spread of radio in the 1920s to the travails of pharmaceutical research. Pick any random page and you will learn something interesting about American life.

It has been said that the further forward you want to forecast, the further back you have to look. Gordon's interest in this volume transcends the business cycle and even momentous fluctuations like the Great Recession that followed the 2008 financial crisis. His interest is in what kind of growth in living



Annual growth in total factor productivity, 1900-2014

Ten-year average, rate over ten years prior to year shown



*The bar labelled 2014 shows the average annual growth rate for 2001-14

Source: Taken from data compiled for The Rise and Fall of American Growth: The U.S. Standard of Living since the Civil War

standards average people entering the labour force are likely to see during their working lives.

Gordon lines up with Silicon Valley entrepreneur Peter Thiel, who has said that, "We wanted flying cars, instead we got 140 characters." Despite all the hype coming out of Silicon Valley, Gordon believes we are in a period of modest progress. Whereas many observers worry that because of technology there will no longer be work for an increasing share of able-bodied adults, he thinks there will be work for all, but very little increase in productivity. Disturbingly, his reading of history and his assessment of a variety of factors in the current environment that he calls "headwinds" lead him to the judgement that, "headwinds are sufficiently strong to leave virtually no room for growth over the next 25 years in median disposable real income per person."

The strongest part of Gordon's book is his evocation of the remarkable 50-year period between 1920 and 1970. My grandmother was born around the turn of the century and died in

"Gordon's most compelling argument is that the greatest generation was also the luckiest generation"

the mid-1970s. Reading Gordon's chapters, I was reminded that over her adult lifetime she saw the flush toilet, electricity for lighting and central heating go from being luxuries enjoyed by a quarter or less of the population to becoming universal. She saw radio come into being and then be supplanted by black-and-white and ultimately colour television. She saw air-conditioning, washing machines, dryers and refrigerators go from

non-existent to universal. Over her lifetime, transportation went from meaning walking, riding a horse or taking some kind of train to being primarily based on cars and aeroplanes. When she had my mother in 1922, infant mortality was 75 per 1000 and large families could expect to suffer an infant or childhood death. When her youngest grandchild was born in the 1960s, infant mortality was below 20 per 1000 and life expectancy had risen by more than a decade.

It is striking to contrast the changes during my grandmother's lifetime with those during mine. I have seen the microwave become universal in American kitchens. Automotive air-conditioning has gone from common to universal. A much wider range of TV programmes are now available and with a much sharper picture. There is a wider array of healthy foods. And, of course, I carry a smartphone that keeps me more connected to information sources, friends and colleagues than was imaginable 50 years ago.

But whereas my grandmother would have been at sea if returned to her girlhood home, I would miss relatively little if suddenly placed in the home I grew up in. It takes longer and is less comfortable to fly from Boston to Washington or London than it was 40 years ago. There are more highways now but much more traffic congestion as well. Life expectancy has continued to increase, though at about half the pace it did during my grandmother's day. But the most important transformation—child death being an extraordinary event—had already happened by the time I was born.

ordon's most compelling argument (although this is not how he puts it) is that the greatest generation is in some ways also the luckiest generation. He provides an onslaught of statistical evidence and carefully considered anecdote in support of the idea that the 1920-1970 period stands out as a period of extraordinary progress in the annals of economic history. While Gordon provides rich discussions of the impact of the Depression, the Second World War and much else, his basic explanation for the remarkable character of the 1920-1970 period is simple. Certain kinds of progress can happen only once. Living in a controlled climate, having access to indoor plumbing, largely eliminating child mortality, controlling infectious disease, and being able to communicate immediately in the absence of physical presence are all examples of transformations that can be built on and improved but seem hard to replicate.

Of Gordon's many charts and graphs the one that impressed me most shows the growth in officially measured total factor productivity by decade from 1900 to the present, pictured above. It steadily escalates from 1900 to 1950 when productivity grew at almost 3.5 per cent and then unsteadily declines to the point where it has averaged well under 1 per cent in the generation since 1990.

Many rightly wonder about mis-measurement of productivity as new products become available and quality improves. Gor-

don is compelling in arguing that productivity growth is indeed significantly underestimated. He is also more persuasive than I expected in arguing that, if anything, this understatement was greater decades ago than it has been recently. In part this is because there were more of these transformational changes that are inherently hard to assimilate in standard frameworks. In part it is because the statisticians do a much better job than they once did of taking account of quality change.

Gordon's aspirations go far beyond writing history. He also seeks to describe the current epoch and to forecast the future. Gordon confronts and largely rejects the views of those he calls the techno-optimists like MIT scholars Erik Brynjolfsson and Andrew McAfee and most of Silicon Valley where Marc Andreessen's view that "software is eating the world" is widely shared. This optimistic view points to the internet and developments like driverless cars, robotics, 3D printing, and artificial intelligence to argue that we are in the midst of a vast economic transformation in which much of the work currently being done by people will be mechanised leading, presumably, to huge gains in output per worker while raising profound questions of job availability and inequity.

Gordon acknowledges a "third industrial revolution" built around software and IT but argues that it is much less signifi-

"Quality improvements and new products are improving life in ways that do not show up in economic statistics"

cant than the "second industrial revolution" of the mid-century because its impacts are largely confined to telecommunications and entertainment. He further argues that it may already be largely played out, and that in any event concerns of technology replacing jobs are not new; workers displaced by new technologies tend to find new jobs, often in sectors created by those new technologies.

Gordon is right in pointing to the huge disjunction between the techno-optimist narrative and the productivity statistics. It is hard to see how technology could be displacing huge numbers of workers without raising measured productivity. And if its effects are so pervasive as to lead to large shifts in the distribution of income with innovators capturing huge rents, why do we not see more evidence of increased output?

I do not have compelling answers to these questions. Yet it is hard to shake the sense that something unusual and important and job threatening is going on. The share of men between the age of 25 and 54 who are out of work has risen from about 5 per cent in the 1960s to about 15 per cent today as it appears that many who lose jobs in recessions never come back. Perhaps, as Gordon seems to suggest, this is a sociological phenomenon or a reflection of increasing problems in education. But I suspect technology along with trade have played an important role.

Economic historians like Paul David have long noted that it took surprisingly long for the benefits of electricity to show up in the economic statistics. Creative destruction takes time. Think about a canonical major innovation like the supermarket.

Initially when it is first introduced all the other shops remain in business with reduced volumes. Measured productivity—defined as total sales per retail worker—go down as employment in retailing rises and total sales remain roughly constant. Only with the passage of time and the closing of traditional shops will measured retail productivity increase. If this story is playing out in many different sectors on different rhythms, overall productivity growth could be relatively slow even as there is substantial job losses in sectors further along in the adjustment process.

The question of how to square developments that are large enough to have a major impact on wage and employment patterns with the paucity of measured productivity growth looms for future research. But it is not only the expectation of slow total factor productivity growth that informs Gordon's pessimistic belief that median incomes will be stagnant over the next generation. He points to reduced growth in average educational attainment, rising inequality, an ageing population, a growing national debt and breakdowns in family structure as headwinds that will further slow growth.

wish that I could convincingly rebut his claims. While there is room for argument—for example, with his analysis of fiscal policy (which gives too little weight to the substantial reduction in debt carrying costs) or his confidence that inequality will continue to rise—his broad point seems likely valid.

While as already noted, I find Gordon persuasive in his claim that the slowdown in productivity growth is not a figment of mis-measurement, the fact that measured median incomes will be stagnant does not mean that most people will not see rising standards of living over time. Incomes rise as people get further into their careers. And quality improvements and new products are improving life in ways that do not show up in economic statistics, though possibly less so than in the past. So it would be a mistake to regard our children as condemned to economic stasis even before considering Gordon's various ideas for accelerating growth.

Economic frustration is a central challenge of our time. It is surely intimately connected with political dysfunction, loss of faith in institutions and much else. Like most things, it is best viewed with historical perspective. There is no better way to get that perspective than by reading Robert Gordon's landmark work.



"Well, you know what they say, better the devil you know...."

What spies should see

New technology helps our enemies as well as us and raises new questions about providing security and preserving freedom

JOHN SAWERS



an we stop a Paris-style attack happening in London? The honest answer is yes—most of the time.

As MI6 Chief, my top priority was identifying terror attacks against Britain planned from abroad. Working with intelligence partners in the United States and the Middle East, we had significant successes. You do not know about the attacks we prevented because they did not occur, and we don't talk about them. Why give our enemies clues to how we stop them?

When I joined MI6, I was trained to spot people tracking me by tapping my phone, intercepting radio communications or following me by car or on foot. Today those techniques are used against terrorist suspects, supported by technologies like face or footstep recognition. But you have to know which people pose a threat—and first, you have to find them.

One method we use is the new science of data analytics. Every time you use your mobile, post a Tweet, shop online, drive past a CCTV camera, tap your Oyster card, or watch a YouTube cat video, you create data. Everything you do digitally—everything anyone does—makes these data oceans bigger, richer and deeper.

So we dive into these data oceans and look for patterns. We search for snippets of information that warrant a closer look. Then we have to work out who, among several thousand possible extremist sympathisers, might launch an attack in Britain next week.

We need to follow suspects wherever they go. If a terror suspect enters a pub, it is reasonable if not vital that the police and security services have the legal power to enter and monitor him or her there. These days, terrorists are scheming in cyberspace. If terror suspects are operating on the internet, it is essential that the police and security services have the legal power to track them online and identify who they are communicating with.

As citizens, we want maximum privacy and maximum security. Unbreakable encryption is at the centre of the argument. Intelligence agencies focus on security; technology companies focus on privacy. They each accuse the other of ignoring the public interest they are protecting, but both have a point. We want world-class encryption to keep our data secure. But terrorists and extremists use this encryption against us, keeping their identities and communications secret. There is nothing new here. Every technological advance—guns, cars, telephones—has quickly been used by the enemies of society. And like these advances, unbreakable encryption cannot be uninvented.

The big technology companies have a crucial role—and a unique responsibility—in building the security that keeps us free and safe. We trust them in part because they are private.



John Sawers was Chief of the Secret Intelligence Service (MI6) between 2009 and 2014. He is now the Chairman of Macro Advisory Partners Co-operation is much preferable to legislation. The next step is for all parties to collaborate on a way forward to benefit from new technologies while doing what we can to stop those who would do us harm. This kind of co-operation between public and private sectors is needed in free societies where security underpins our privacy, private enterprise and liberal democracy.

How, though, should we set clear limits on how the state can acquire data?

Say that you do not trust the government and intelligence agencies, but you also do not want to live in fear of terrorism. You grudgingly accept that agencies need to look at internet data to find and track terrorist networks. Then you sit down to devise laws and come up with something like the following.

First, privacy is the norm. Exceptions are allowed only when a minister decides that intrusion is necessary. Second, while agencies can look for patterns in data, high-level authorisation is needed to track individuals. Next, those doing the work must be tightly vetted and alarms should go off over improper searches.

"Is it better to shut down this ghastly material, even if you drive it deeper into the dark web?"

Then, while we should share intelligence with other governments, we use extreme caution if they have a bad human rights record. Finally, there must be oversight by MPs and judges, frequent spot-checks, and checks and balances on every level.

Guess what? That is more or less what we have now.

There is rarely a good time for these debates. New laws rushed through after a major attack will not strike a wise, principled balance. Fortunately, this is not the case with the new Investigatory Powers Bill before parliament. This is based on the recommendations of David Anderson QC, the Independent Reviewer of Terrorism Legislation, and is designed to strike such a balance.

When you put all the powers of the agencies into one codified legal framework, the overall package might look ominous, if not alarming. Do our agencies really need to be able to do all this?

Some people also argue that if state surveillance did not stop the Paris attacks, what good is it? But, to make an analogy, no goalkeeper has a perfect record. Even the finest can be beaten by a top-class shot or a freakish deflection. That does not make them a bad goalkeeper, or the idea of goalkeeping redundant.

I do not want to downplay reasonable concerns. But technologies that empower us also empower our enemies. We can track down people like Mohammed Emwazi, known as "Jihadi John." But you and your children are only a few clicks away from people who use 3D printers to create replica guns, those who make synthetic drugs, or from Islamic State (IS) and al-Qaeda and their propaganda.

This presents an acute dilemma. Is it better to shut down this ghastly material, even if you drive it deeper into the dark web? Or should we accept that this poison is in society's bloodstream and quietly watch what is happening and who might be infected?

Those in the intelligence and security services face this dilemma all the time. You can trust the skill and restraint of the people working day and night to protect you. Or you can further limit their powers—and pray the people working day

and night to destroy our societies do not hit you, your family or your town.

Today's security requires the use of technology to guarantee huge areas of freedom for all of us, by making difficult compromises on the margins. This is not an attack on privacy, but the only way to safeguard it while combatting the enemies of free society.

echnology is changing foreign policy as well. In 1982, under President Hafez al-Assad—the father of Syria's current President, Bashar al-Assad—the Syrian army attacked Hama, Syria's fourth largest city, to put down an Islamist uprising. They killed over 20,000 people—three times the death toll of Srebrenica. The attack went on for weeks, but barely any news seeped out. When it did, global reaction was muted. There was little public pressure and it suited most governments to look away.

Compare that with the reaction to Malaysia Airlines flight MH17, shot down over Ukraine in July 2014. Swarms of amateurs and experts from everywhere in the world took to the internet. Drawing on live satellite imagery and other open-source websites, they pinpointed the probable launchpoint of the missile, the type of missile used, and the likely people responsible. They punched big holes in the official story coming from Moscow and pointed the finger of guilt at Moscow-backed separatists.

In *BloombergView*, James Gibney called this a "citizen-driven open-source intelligence revolution." In October, bombs fell on a Médecins Sans Frontières hospital in Afghanistan. Crowd-sourced investigation quickly forced the US to accept responsibility. All very admirable—but the immediacy and transparency of today's technology is giving our leaders serious problems.

The first problem is time. Events and disasters now come thick and fast. The 24/7 media cycle and incessant clamour of the internet puts politicians under pressure to respond quickly. Often, their actions are aimed at shutting up their noisiest critics. Yet what may be needed is real leadership, taking people along a path that is tough, slow and unpopular to achieve a greater goal.

Take Syria again. In 2011, Syrians demonstrated against Bashar al-Assad's rule and he turned the army on them. The west was torn, but did not intervene. Then in 2013, he used chemical weapons against his people in a breach of international conventions. This war crime demands a swift, strong response: it is vital to hold the line against these weapons. The British government took a clear position that military action is required, but chose to seek approval from parliament. Reflecting public unease about another Middle East intervention, parliament said no. President Barack Obama then had doubts whether he could act without the support of Congress. This left the west in a hopeless position, "demanding" the departure of Assad without tackling him.

Since then, Syria's civil war has created space for the rise of IS, who pose the worst terrorist threat in living memory. Syrian refugees are coming in unmanageable numbers, undermining European solidarity. And now Russia is involved, unconstrained by democratic pressures or concern for civilian casualties, using air power and missiles to prop up the dismal Assad regime.

We all share some responsibility for these grim outcomes. But when timelines are so short and technology gives a deafeningly loud voice to all sorts of critics, well-intentioned or not, thinking strategically becomes next to impossible in a modern democracy.

In the wake of the Paris attacks, we need a strategy to help the Syrian people and remove IS from its strongholds. A new diplomatic process for Syria has begun, but its outcome will be \triangleright

shaped by the strength of forces on the ground. If we want moderates to have a voice, we need to support them militarily.

The second problem is trust. Technology makes us all more accountable. Scandals such as MPs' expenses or media phone tapping are healthy exposures of abuse. But examples like these can lead to unbridled cynicism, in which anything secret is a cover-up.

Yet patient diplomacy relies on confidentiality. For years, the Iran nuclear talks were stuck. Both the US and Iran faced forces at home rejecting compromise. Then the Obama Administration made a sustained effort with Iran through secret meetings in Oman. It led to a breakthrough and then an agreement. At times, transparency has to sit back and give diplomacy a chance.

The final problem is disruptive change. Every leader, good or bad, wants to reap the benefit of new technologies and big data. But what if today's technology is too disruptive for free societies, making democracies look weak or uncertain?

In contrast, autocratic or oppressive systems may avoid the worst disruptions. They are already skilled at closing down debate and manipulating public opinion. And they do not worry about transparency, so they can think strategically and act decisively. No country is more strategic than China. I have met some of China's leaders and they plan in decades, even centuries: they are surprised that we don't. As we saw in Ukraine and now Syria, President Vladimir Putin is using his power to create new realities. Autocratic states may start to look stronger, more effective, more orderly than democracies.

But, for all their fumbling, scandal and confusion, democracies have one huge advantage. They are flexible and open. They embrace new ideas and opportunities. It is our greatest strength. Yet we cannot take success for granted. We are at a moment in history like the industrial revolution. Who will get first mover advantage, as Britain did in the 18th and 19th centuries?

Societies that master big data will enjoy a head start, whether they are democratic or not. They will lead the way in artificial intelligence and robotics, reaping benefits in health and education simply by knowing more. They will adjust faster to change. Nations that veer away from new technology will fall behind, and radical new inequalities in wealth and power emerge.

Soon, self-learning computers will start displacing peo-

ple. Scientists like Stephen Hawking urge us to consider the ethical implications of this now, rather than wait until they are upon us. We need to work through the implications for our politics, too. To make technology support our freedoms won over centuries, and not erode them, we must think ahead, and not leave the next generation with a stark choice between security or freedom.

ack in 1973, I went to university to study physics. Computer science looked too hard so I took philosophy modules instead. That led me into my career in foreign affairs and security. I drew on my nuclear physics when negotiating with the Iranians—much to their surprise. Foreign policy and intelligence work have echoes of physics—they are both about the balance of forces, momentum, pressure, optics. And parallel worlds, for instance. Or things working on one scale, but not another.

My whole career has been geared around the issues of freedom and security. Neither can be absolute or guaranteed: and each depends on the other. Oppressive security undermines freedom. But freedoms evaporate if there is no security we can rely on to uphold them.

The longer term issues raise by new technologies for our societies and political systems are much greater and more profound than the short term trade offs needed to combat terrorism. No one knows where technology will take us. In a free society we have the advantage of dynamism and flexibility. We're going to need that to ensure the technologies are harnessed to reinforce both freedom and security. We don't want to wake up one day and discover that new technology has pushed us in a direction we never wanted to take.

DH Lawrence once wrote: "If only we could have two lives. The first in which to make one's mistakes, which seem as if they have to be made. And the second in which to profit by them." With new technologies, perhaps we will soon have that luxury.

John Sawers will be speaking at *Prospect's* London offices on Thursday 25th February. A limited number of tickets are available, to buy yours please visit www.prospectmagazine.co.uk/events

The power to intrude

Has the government found a balance between privacy and security with the Investigatory Powers Bill?

JOSHUA ROZENBERG

or Islamist terrorists, the prospect of prosecution and punishment is no deterrent. They expect to be killed, either by their own bombs or by those enforcing the law. So public protection depends on thwarting potential terrorists before they can attack. And

that, in turn, depends on intelligence—much of it obtained through covert means.

Improving the UK's intelligence gathering was a priority for Alex Carlile QC, a Liberal Democrat member of the House of Lords, immediately after the Paris attacks on 13th November last year. Between 2001 and 2011, he acted as the government's independent reviewer of terrorism legislation and called on parliament to pass the Investigatory Powers Bill before the end of 2015.

But that was never going to happen. The government had published a draft of its bill a few days earlier, to allow plenty of time for parliamentary scrutiny. More to the point, the bill adds >



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²Ponemon Institute, "Annual Global IT Security Benchmark Tracking Study," March 2015.

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relatively little to the powers that the UK's security and intelligence agencies already have at their disposal. Its aim is to modernise those powers, make them easier to understand and to strengthen oversight.

But one new power involves what the bill calls internet connection records. These are records of the internet services a specific device has connected to, such as a website or instant messaging application. They could be used to demonstrate that a certain

"Until recently, the intelligence services could have traced your contacts by asking your phone provider for your billing records"

device had accessed an online communications service but not to identify what the user did on that service. While there is currently no requirement for communications service providers to keep

these records, in future they will be required to retain them for up to 12 months so that they can be disclosed to law enforcement agencies if the request is considered necessary and proportionate.

Until recently, it was still possible to identify individuals from the unique Internet Protocol (IP) address that was assigned to every device on the internet, rather like looking up the names of suspects from their phone numbers. Nowadays, though, scarce IP addresses may be shared among as many as 5,000 users at a time. So the new law will require telecoms providers to retain additional identifying information, such as port numbers. Once it's known which services a suspect has used to communicate online, investigators can make further enquiries. Until recently, they could have traced your contacts by asking your phone provider for your billing records. But that won't help them if you make video calls on Skype or send instant messages on WhatsApp.

Even so, law enforcement agencies believe the bill does not give them all the powers they need. Keith Bristow, Director-General of the National Crime Agency, told a committee of MPs and peers that the police would not be able to use internet connection records merely to identify further leads—which flights a suspect had booked, for example.

Tracking communications is not the only weapon in the spooks'

A remarkably frank account of equipment interference was given to the Investigatory Powers Tribunal, a court to which the intelligence and security agencies are answerable, by a senior official at GCHQ, the government's eavesdropping centre.

Ciaran Martin, the organisation's Director for Cyber Security, said that "CNE is a set of techniques through which an individ-

"This government needs the bill to become law by the end of this year, when temporary data retention legislation expires"

ual gains covert and remote access to a computer"—which may be a laptop, router or a mobile. At the most basic level, Martin explained, it may involve using an administrator's credentials to log into the device. "More sophisticated CNE operations involve taking advantage of weaknesses in software."

That weakness might allow an implant—also called a "backdoor" or "Trojan"—to be installed, perhaps by persuading a user to click on a link or open a document. A simple implant will transmit information input by an unsuspecting user over the internet. But other implants "might monitor the activity of the user of the target device or take control of the computer."

This presumably includes switching on a device's camera and microphone, even when it's not being used to make calls. The draft bill allows "observing or listening to a person's communications or other activities" to obtain "information relating to a person's private or family life." Martin accepted that CNE operations could be "highly intrusive." But so is hiding a camera in your bedroom, which will not require prior judicial authorisation.

Critics have claimed that equipment interference will allow the agencies to create viruses that take on a life of their own. Shane Harris, a senior correspondent at the Daily Beast, suggests in his book, @War, that in the build up to the invasion of Iraq in 2003 "military leaders [in the United States] called off a planned cyber attack on Iraq's banking system for fear the malware might migrate from Iraqi computer networks to those used by banks in France. Owing to the interconnected architecture of the internet, the two countries' financial systems were linked." He also suggests that, in the process of infecting insurgents' phones and computers, it was possible that the malware could come back and infect US devices. But those in the know say that creating widespread vulnerabilities would not be in the agencies' interests, quite apart from being illegal. As Martin said, intelligence agencies seek to make minimal, and ideally the most transient, changes to targeted devices. GCHQ doesn't want anyone to know who it's monitoring.

The draft bill also allows bulk interference with equipment—as



When Theresa May, Home Secretary (above), presented the draft Investigatory Powers Bill to Parliament on 4th November, she said it was designed to "keep us safe in the face of an evolving threat" from terrorism and organised crime. Advances in information technology, May argued, gave those who would do us harm the "opportunity to avoid detection." Police and security forces need more powers, she concluded. The bill's most significant provisions are:

- Internet and phone companies must store records of websites visited by every citizen for 12 months.
- The bill formalises the powers of the security services and police to hack into and monitor computers and phones. Phone companies and internet service providers will be required to help bypass encryption.
- Companies will be required to maintain "permanent capabilities" to intercept and collect personal data passing over their networks.

May insisted that the powers conferred would be "subject to robust safeguards." These include:

- A "double lock" on ministerial authorisation of intercept warrants, with a panel of seven judicial commissioners given power of veto.
- Safeguards to protect communications by people working in "sensitive professions," including journalists and lawyers.

Critics argue that these safeguards are not robust enough. Nick Clegg, former Deputy Prime Minister, said: "The so-called 'double lock' appears to be nothing of the sort, as judges will have very little discretion when making decisions about individual warrants." As one legal commentator put it, the government will have to show that the judicial oversight provided for in the bill is more than a "constitutional figleaf." Some in the tech industry worry about the consequences of weakening encryption. Tim Cook, CEO of Apple, said: "Everybody wants to crack down on terrorists. Everybody wants to be secure. The question is how. Opening a back door can have dire consequences."

May said the bill is the basis for "further consultation." A revised bill will be presented to Parliament later this year.

well as bulk interception of communications and related data—sent to or from people outside the borders of the British Isles. And the bill permits the intelligence services to obtain and use bulk personal datasets. These contain information about a number of people—in the case of the electoral roll, for example, a very large number—most of whom are of no interest to the authorities.

Again, it was only in 2015 that the use of these powers was publicly acknowledged—or "avowed"—even though they have been authorised under legislation dating back to 1984. Under the draft bill, though, the intelligence services would need to obtain a bulk warrant from a secretary of state. And—as with warrants for interception of communications and equipment interference—warrants would also have to be approved by a judicial commissioner, one of the bill's main innovations.

The commissioner could be a serving high court judge,

KEVSHUI IEKSTUU



GCHQ's "donut" building in Cheltenham

seconded for a three-year term. But going back on the bench after working for the government would pose problems and commissioners are more likely to have retired from the judiciary. It's thought that around seven will be needed, headed by a high-profile investigatory powers commissioner—in my opinion most likely to be Heather Hallett, a senior Court of Appeal judge, unless she becomes Chief Justice first. The government needs the bill itself to become law by the end of this year, when temporary data retention legislation expires, but the new commissioners will not be appointed until some time in 2017.

In approving the secretary of state's decision to issue a warrant, a judicial commissioner must consider whether the action it authorises is necessary and proportionate. The commissioner must apply the same principles as a court would when hearing an application for judicial review. That provision in the draft bill has persuaded some critics that the commissioner would be powerless at best and a rubber-stamp at worst.

Judicial review, as developed by the courts over the past 40 years or more, used to be more about process than substance. But the test is now more stringent, as the three former judges who monitor the existing legislation made clear to the parliamentary committee set up to consider the draft bill. A commissioner may defer to the agencies on whether a particular warrant was necessary. But any former judge can assess the level of collateral intrusion and decide whether it goes too far.

ou might think that people working in intelligence and law enforcement would resent the imposition of judicial commissioners. Certainly, the agencies will need new systems and secure links. But it's thought they will be happy enough, so long as the arrangements for issuing or amending warrants at very short notice work effectively (because "flash-to-bang" can be very quick). One advantage of judicial oversight is that it might reduce the risk of subsequent legal chal-

lenges. Another advantage is in reassuring potential sources.

David Anderson, the current independent reviewer of terrorism legislation, told MPs and peers of a message he had received from "someone at GCHQ." It said: "I hope these new commissioners really make [the agencies] work hard to prove that what they are doing is necessary and proportionate." In Anderson's view, everybody wanted to put investigatory powers on to a sound legal footing, "If you are trying to recruit people on the pavements

"In the end, it comes down to trust. Can we rely on those who work in the secret world and those who oversee them?"

of Shoreditch to come and use their technical skills to work for GCHQ, you do not want to be seen to be working in some shadowy grey area where you are dodging in and out of the law."

Anderson believes that there is "now a complete avowal of significant capabilities, at least in outline." But there are still broadly-drawn powers towards the end of the draft bill that could be abused by a future government. We can have little idea of what techniques these powers might permit the agencies to use in future, just as we had little idea until recently of how the existing legislation was being used. Campaign groups say we could be told more about the agencies' capabilities without undermining their effectiveness.

In the end, it all comes down to trust. Can we rely on those who work in the secret world and those who oversee them? Do they come across as honest, decent people?

It's cultural, as much as anything else: there are some things the UK's agencies just won't do. Their staff demand reassurance that their activities are lawful. And they know that co-operation from outsiders—on which they rely for their effectiveness—will be offered more willingly if they have a reputation for rectitude.

As we try to find our way through a largely uncharted online world, we require the agencies to respect our personal privacy while defending us from attack. Those two requirements are bound to conflict. It's now for parliament to decide whether this bill has got the balance right.



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Image: Grein on the Danube, lithograph by A. Kunike c. 1840.

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The end of argument

Students are demanding to be protected from ideas they find offensive or just uncomfortable.

Academics should stop indulging this idea; students should grow up

FRANK FUREDI

n both sides of the Atlantic, the cultural politics of higher education are undergoing a profound transformation. The values of experimentation, risk-taking and openness to new ideas promoted in the 1960s and 1970s have given way to a climate of moral regulation and conformism. University life has always been subject to pressures to conform, of course, and to submit to political and economic interests. However, until relatively recently, the main threat to academic freedom came from sources outside universities. Today it is no longer merely the illiberal media and intolerant politicians who call for dissident academics to be silenced or controversial speakers to be banned. Such calls are more likely to emanate from *inside* universities, and their most vociferous proponents are students, not faculty.

For anyone who believes that academic freedom and free speech are fundamental values that underpin university life, the casual manner in which these principles are being cast aside in Britain and the United States will come as a shock. Contempt for these freedoms is now openly expressed. A good example is "The Doctrine of Academic Freedom," a polemic published in the *Harvard Crimson*, a student newspaper, in February 2014. The article depicted academic freedom as a barrier to the achievement of justice. The undergraduate author, Sandra YL Korn, displayed a chilling disdain for a value central to academic life, describing it as the "obsession" of a privileged professorial caste.

Explicit criticism of academic freedom is still relatively muted—at least compared to the increasingly shrill denunciation of free speech. Today, many campus activists argue that no one has the right to use words that offend others. Take Oxford University activist Niamh McIntyre's call for speech to be moderated: "This generation of students and activists is standing up and saying that for too long, men have spoken over women, trans and non-binary people, just as white people have spoken over people of colour," she told *Times Higher Education* in December. "In some cases, they should shut up and listen. And sometimes, to the horror of certain academics and professional narcissists, this involves rethinking the right to speak at all times, for all people, on any topic." "Rethinking the right to speak at all times" is a delicate way of suggesting that it is not a right.

Campaigns to ban invited speakers from campuses have been a feature of student politics for decades. In the 1980s and 1990s, there were frequent calls to ban representatives from the farright (a demand known as "no-platforming"). But in the current climate it is not only right-wing extremists who are at risk of being silenced, but anyone espousing views deemed controversial. Recent student-led campaigns on British campuses have sought to ban speakers such as Maryam Namazie, an Iranian-born campaigner for secularism and human rights, and the feminist writer Germaine Greer. In October, the students' union at Manchester University no-platformed the radical feminist activist and writer Julie Bindel. As is often the case with these bans, Bindel was to talk on the subject of freedom of speech.

The intolerance is not only directed at controversial political views. Student activism has been consumed by a moralism that seeks to regulate and micro-manage how people speak and behave towards one another. Historically, universities provided a platform for cultural experimentation. Today, by contrast, the instinct is to contain edgier forms of expression. Many student union activists have adopted habits more commonly associated with religious censorship. Stand-up comedy is one of their targets. The US campus circuit is highly lucrative, but such is the climate that some comedians, notably Chris Rock, have stopped performing at colleges. In a recent article in the *Atlantic*, other comedians revealed how they censored their acts to avoid offending sections of the student audience. Comedy is also a target in Britain. In February 2015, a gig by the comedian Kate Smurthwaite at Goldsmiths, University of London, was can-

"Contemporary student protest is inchoate and often arbitrary. Almost anything is a potential target"

celled after some students objected to her views on prostitution.

Contemporary student protest is inchoate and often arbitrary. Almost anything is a potential target. At the University of East Anglia in September, a Mexican restaurant was stopped from handing out free sombreros on the grounds that these were racist. In November, there were complaints at Oxford University about the themes chosen for end-of-year balls at Lincoln and Magdalen Colleges. Lincoln's New Orleans theme allegedly represents a form of "cultural appropriation," while Magdalen's look back to the year 1926 apparently reminds women and people of colour of their exclusion from the college in the 1920s.

Some protests have had more serious consequences. In October, the Intercultural Affairs Council, a university body at Yale, emailed students urging them to be sensitive about the cultural implications of their Halloween costumes. Lecturer Erika Christakis responded by sending her own message to students,





Safe space? Yale University students demonstrate against racial insensitivity on campus in November 2015

suggesting that they don't need administrators to tell them what costumes to wear. The ensuing controversy, combined with other racially charged incidents, led to angry rallies and the formation of the group Next Yale, which called for an end to the "intolerable racism" on campus. "I don't want to debate. I want to talk about my pain," one student wrote in the undergraduate newspaper *Yale Herald*. Christakis has now resigned from teaching at Yale.

As mobilisations like these demonstrate, even the minutiae of campus life are now a target of scrutiny and political campaigning. This suggests that what is at work here is not so much a distinct political outlook as a readiness to be outraged. The sentiments and anxieties expressed by students are free-floating, but common to all the protests is a compulsion to cleanse the university of the values, practices, words and ideas that may serve as a source of unease and offence.

here was a time when campus radicals revelled in their status as militants and revolutionaries. In the 1960s and 1970s, radical students boasted of their power to change the world and often adopted lifestyles that are now characterised as risky and dangerous. Today, student protestors project a very different image, drawing attention to their status as victims and flaunting their sensitivity to offence. They frequently use therapeutic language and, most importantly, talk constantly about themselves and their feelings.

Take the case of Arushi Garg, the Oxford law student who criticised the theme of the Magdalen ball. "I felt uncomfortable with the advertising," she told *Cherwell*, the student newspaper.

"Obviously my demographic (woman of colour from a former colony that remains a developing country) makes me less likely than others to uncritically long for a past that privileged some more than others." The implication is that this emotional reaction ought to be taken very seriously. The mere expression of such feelings counts as evidence that they must contain some essential truth.

For every demand that something be banned because it is offensive, there are hundreds of more low-level instances of students insisting that they should be shielded from discomfort. It is not uncommon, for instance, for American students to ask their professors to change course readings because they find them troubling or traumatising.

In 2014, Harvard law professor Jeannie Suk wrote about the difficulties that now surround the teaching of rape law in her department. Although her students are more interested in discussing gender and violence than before, they want to do so in a therapeutically regulated environment. Women's student organisations frequently advise undergraduates not to feel under pressure to attend classes on the law of sexual violence, in case they find it uncomfortable. At Harvard, faculty in the rape law unit were asked by students to warn classes about topics that may "trigger" traumatic memories. One teacher, Suk reports, was asked not to use the word "violate" (as in "violating the law") on the grounds that it was triggering.

There is now a cultural crusade to institutionalise the attachment of a "trigger warning" to any text that might unsettle a reader. Trigger warnings originated on the internet, attached >



Free to speak? L to r: feminist writers Julie Bindel and Germaine Greer; secularism and human rights campaigner Maryam Namazie

to material containing particularly graphic descriptions of, say, sexual assault. In the last few years, their use has expanded into other mediums and to cover practically any topic. Supporters of trigger warnings argue that readers need to be forewarned that the ideas, views, images and attitudes they are about to encounter may make them feel uncomfortable or even traumatised. But feeling uncomfortable, disturbed or marginalised is a relatively normal part of everyday life and trigger warnings could be applied to just about any novel or poem.

Who could have imagined that students at an Ivy League college would denounce a professor for failing to use a trigger warning before a discussion of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*? Yet in April 2015, a group of undergraduates at Columbia University did just that. They questioned the professor's judgement in focusing on the "beauty of the language and the splendour of the imagery," while failing to warn students about the description of rape and sexual assault contained in the poem.

When the debate on trigger warnings erupted in the US in 2014 many academics assumed that this censoriousness was just a passing fad. Today, however, the principle underlying the demand for trigger warnings—the need to protect students from discomfort and upset—has taken hold on both US and UK campuses. In the vocabulary of British student activists, "trigger warning" is a stock phrase on a par with "free education." Students involved in a recent occupation at Goldsmiths announced: "Trigger warnings must be regular practice in lecture and seminars." The preoccupation has gone so far that the National Union of Students now puts health warnings on its own publications. Here is an example from September: "This report carries a trigger warning for discussions of sexual assault and rape."

Another key term in the vocabulary of campus crusaders is "micro-aggression." First coined in 1970, the term was more recently popularised by Derald Wing Sue, a psychologist at Columbia. He defines micro-aggressions as the "the brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioral, and environmental

indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative racial, gender, and sexual orientation, and religious slights and insults to the target person or group." Note that these indignities need not be the result of intentional behavior. Indeed, Sue argues that "perpetrators of micro-aggressions are often unaware" of the harms they inflict.

The focus on the unconscious or unwitting dimension of micro-aggression is important. People accused of this misdemeanor are not indicted for what they have done nor for what they said, and not even for what they think they think, but for their unconscious thoughts. It does not matter what a micro-aggressor intended—what counts is that someone claims that they were insulted or traumatised by their gestures or words. The denunciation of micro-aggressions has meshed seamlessly

"Student protest often uses the language of therapy, but it possesses a powerful authoritarian impulse too"

with the obsessive search for harmful gestures and words associated with everyday sexism and racism. Micro-aggression offers a moral resource on which the performance of outrage can draw.

This performance of outrage is a central feature of the moral crusade against micro-aggressions. There are micro-aggression websites where "victims" air their grievances. Often these show individuals holding signs on which is written a message of defiance against the micro-aggressor. In 2014, students from Oxford copied the "I, Too, Am Harvard" campaign, which highlighted the perceived slights and insults suffered by black students. On the "I, too, am Oxford" website, students from ethnic minorities are photograped holding a small whiteboard. One reads, "Wow



Above, political activist and comedian Kate Smurthwaite

your English is great! Thanks—I was born in London." Another: "All the post-colonial and other critical theories you study does NOT entitle you to speak for me or over me."

The main value promoted by these protests is that of safety, and the implicit aim is to turn universities into "safe spaces". The idea of safe spaces emerged with the women's movement, which sought to create an environment in which women could cultivate their collective strength. In recent years, the notion of safe space has become part of a strategy that aims to shield students from ideas and influences that might make them feel uncomfortable. When they call for creation of a safe space, students are demanding the creation of a kind of moral quarantine.

Although student protest today often uses the touchy-feely language of therapy, it possesses a powerful authoritarian impulse, too. The politicisation of feelings and emotions is often unrestrained and vindictive, and the demands to ban speakers and humiliate transgressors who fail to fall into line is anything but touchy and feely. Recent campaigns for a safe space at the University of Missouri seemed more intent on forcing administrators to enrol in a shaming session than in ensuring students' own safety. At Goldsmiths in early December, members of the Islamic Society disrupted a talk by Maryam Namazie and condemned her for violating their "safe space".

t would be too easy to blame students for the infantilisation of campus life. But their preoccupation with feelings and emotions is the direct outcome of the kind of child rearing and schooling they received as children. Inadvertently, the socialisation of young people has led to the cultivating of their sense of vulnerability. The value of safety now enjoys an almost sacred status outside the academy, so it is not surprising that higher education has internalised the preoccupations of wider society.

Since the 1990s, the belief that undergraduates are biologically mature but emotionally fragile has taken hold among uni-

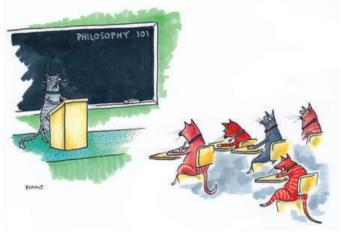
versity administrators and academics. Well before the invention of the trigger warning, campus administrators developed codes of conduct to regulate behaviour. Campus life, which was relatively unregulated in the 1970s, gradually became reorganised around the principle of safety. Risky behaviour and experimentation were regulated by new codes of conduct. The idea behind these codes was to protect students—not just from others, but also from themselves. By the turn of the 21st century, the belief that students were a uniquely vulnerable group disposed to trauma and psychological illness had gained cultural authority.

From this point on, universities increasingly adopted practices traditionally associated with the clinic. Sensitivity training, mental health initiatives and the raising of awareness have become an integral feature of campus life. I was involved in radical student politics in the 1970s. I first realised how much the world had changed since then in 2004, when it was reported that Alan Heesom, the dean of arts and humanities at Durham University, had sent a memo to staff announcing that they would need to get approval from an "ethics" committee if they wished to lecture on topics that might offend students (these included euthanasia, abortion and witchcraft).

Heesom's memo, which demanded that appropriate notice be given to students before lecturing them on sensitive subjects was a few years ahead of its time. Today, every university in the UK has adopted rules of conduct or codes of practices that convey the same message: the student must not be offended. Such codes insist that staff and students should be sensitive to the feelings of others in their use of language.

Is it any surprise that the culture of insulating students from offensive or disturbing ideas has become so pervasive that it has been embraced by sections of the undergraduate community itself? The infantilisation of undergraduates has succeeded to the point that now it is the turn of the students to demand that they be protected from the risk of disturbing thoughts.

Yet academic integrity demands that students are challenged and sometimes confronted with views that they find disturbing and offensive. Feeling exposed, insecure and, yes, uncomfortable is part of the intellectual adventure we undertake in the quest for knowledge. Academics, therefore, should stop treating undergraduates as if they are children who need protection from difficult or controversial views, while students should stop playing the offence card and grow up.



"Today we consider the question, 'is it hiding if no one is trying to find you?'"

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At the crossroads of conflict

New violence has made the two-state solution seem harder to reach than ever, but it is still the least bad vision for Palestinians and Israelis

GERSHOM GORENBERG

ush Etzion Junction is a big unkempt roundabout where two roads and several separate universes meet. To the north, the highway runs along the mountain ridge of the West Bank to Jerusalem. To the south, following an ancient route, it continues to Hebron and beyond. The east and west spokes lead to Israeli settlements and Palestinian villages. A new road sign on the eastern carriageway points to a nature reserve named after three Israeli teenagers who were kidnapped and murdered by Palestinian terrorists while hitchhiking in June 2014.

When I went to the junction on a wintry afternoon, some high school girls and a woman in a sweater-dress and beret were waiting to hitchhike north. Stickers on the nearby bus shelter warned hitchhikers to stand behind the concrete posts on the pavement. The posts are there to protect people from drivers who swerve onto the pavement to run them over—a common type of attack against Israelis by lone Palestinians in recent months.

There's a petrol station and a supermarket on the west side of the junction. Security cameras are hung in groups from the lamp-posts outside, like the fruit of strange metallic date palms. At each of the roundabout's four exits, I saw a pair of soldiers standing behind metre-high concrete cubes. They held assault rifles in their hands with the long magazines in, ready to respond to the next attack. On one of the cubes, someone had stencilled an advert in Arabic using spray paint: "DJ Re-Mash Music," with a phone number. The worlds of everyday commerce and political violence touch and overlap here, as do the worlds of Israelis and Palestinians.

Between mid-September, when the latest wave of violence began, and mid-December, there were 109 attacks by Palestinians against Israelis in the West Bank and inside Israel. All, except for one, were carried out by individuals, or occasionally by pairs, acting on their own without the direction of the Palestinian militant organisations. Knives and cars were the usual weapons. The death toll included 19 Israelis and an American student—and at least 75 Palestinians were killed while attempting or carrying out attacks. Israeli human rights groups assert that soldiers and police have sometimes shot to kill even when the assailant was no longer a threat.

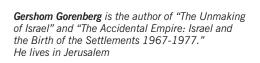
Eight of those attacks took place at Gush Etzion Junction. While I stood photographing hitchhikers, it occurred to me that I wasn't protected by the concrete posts, and that my children wouldn't be happy with me if I got run over for a camera angle.

There is a fruitless debate about whether what is happening constitutes a new Intifada—the word literally means "shaking off", but has become the term for a Palestinian uprising. It is certainly very different from the First Intifada in the late 1980s to early 1990s, which involved mass confrontations with Israeli troops and widespread civil disobedience; or the Second in the early 2000s, in which competing Palestinian organisations carried out suicide bombings in Israeli cities. So far, there is no sign of an organised leadership. Assailants who were captured alive have told interrogators that they decided to act as little as half an hour in advance. The Palestinian Authority (PA), the autonomous government in large parts of the West Bank, continues to co-operate with Israeli security services to prevent terror attacks—though the lack of terror cells to penetrate and the use of everyday objects as weapons has made the job more difficult for both Israeli and Palestinian intelligence agencies. At the time of writing this, it looks less like a revolution than an epidemic of violent despair.

The backdrop for that despair includes the obvious lack of interest of Benjamin Netanyahu, the Israeli Prime Minister, in negotiating a two-state agreement and the failure of Mahmoud Abbas, the Palestinian President, to bring any progress toward independence. The current violence, say some analysts, is the latest proof that the two-state concept is dead. "The only thing left is to face the reality in which Israelis and Palestinians are hopelessly entangled," wrote Asher Schechter, an Israeli commentator, in the newspaper *Haaretz*. "The binational state that the architects of the two-state solution warned us about looks very much like the one transpiring before our very eyes." In this picture, Jews and Palestinians have become two ethnic communities locked in a single political entity and engaged in low-level conflict—with one community holding power and the other chafing against it.

As someone who has covered the Palestinian-Israeli conflict for nearly 30 years, I believe that depiction is mistaken. The political regime inside Israel remains fundamentally different from that in the occupied territories. Aside from in Jerusalem, Israeli society and West Bank Palestinian society have grown apart—not closer together. The divide between Israel and Gaza is even deeper. Though comparisons to other nations' history are rarely useful, it is more correct to see the West Bank as Israel's Algeria than to claim that Israel has become South Africa.

It is true that the situation today is oppressive for Palestini-







An Israeli soldier from an elite infantry unit stands guard at the Gush Etzion junction in the Israeli-occupied West Bank

ans and self-destructive for Israel. And it is true that the recent bloodletting is a consequence of the lack of diplomatic progress. But the West Bank and Gaza have not merged with Israel, and a two-state arrangement is still the most realistic alternative to the current situation. Or to quote a character in the Hollywood film Argo, "This is the best bad idea we have, sir."

hat is happening in this latest round of violence? A little more than 10 per cent of the attacks occurred inside Israel, not counting Jerusalem. Just over a quarter were within the municipal borders of Jerusalem—most in Israeli-annexed East Jerusalem or close to the so-called "seam line," the pre-1967 border. The rest were in the West Bank—particularly in Hebron (the only place where Israeli settlers live inside a Palestinian city), at Gush Etzion Junction and at Israeli army checkpoints.

Overwhelmingly, then, the arena of bloodletting has been occupied territory, with settlers and Israeli troops as the target. Only three of the attackers have been Palestinian citizens of Israel; the rest were from East Jerusalem or the West Bank. That

may change, but this is what has happened so far. And so far, the violence expresses the anger of people living under occupation against the occupiers, of the colonised against a colonial regime.

Proponents of the single state would argue that the reason for the geographical distribution of attacks is that most West Bank Palestinians cannot get into Israel. But this only emphasises the point: despite the growth of the settlements, Israel and the occupied territories have slowly moved apart. The days when residents of the West Bank and Gaza could travel freely inside Israel, and when Israelis could go dancing in Bethlehem on Friday night because nightspots in Jerusalem were closed for the Sabbath, ended with the First Intifada. After the Oslo Accords, signed in 1993 and 1995, the PA took over day-to-day government services in the West Bank and Gaza, reducing most Palestinians' contact with Israeli civilian officials—though in the long term, not with soldiers. Meanwhile, Israel built roads to settlements that looped around PA-controlled areas and settlers no longer drove through Bethlehem or Ramallah on a daily basis.

At the beginning of the Second Intifada, the Israeli army—under the laws of occupation, the official sovereign in the West >

Bank and Gaza—barred Israelis from entering PA-administered cities, fearing they might be kidnapped or killed. At the same time, Israel sharply cut the number of work permits available to residents of occupied territory—from 150,000 on the eve of the uprising to 40,000 two months later. Wages earned in Israel had made up "close to 20 per cent of the national income" of the occupied territories, says Dr Sami Miaari, a professor at Tel Aviv University's Department of Labor Studies. The Palestinian "private sector completely collapsed," threatening the stability of the PA. Only in 2009 did the number of Palestinian workers in

"Creating a single state would mean the issue of borders would evaporate. But all other issues at dispute would remain"

Israel begin to rise again. Miaari estimates that the figure today is half of what it was before 2000—and a much smaller proportion of a growing population. At most, he believes only a few hundred of them come from the Gaza Strip. The Gaza enclave has been virtually cut off since Hamas seized control of it in 2007 and Israel imposed a gradually tightening blockade.

In response to the economic crisis of 2000, says Miaari, the PA tried to employ workers from the private sector using funds from donor countries. Put differently, the Palestinian economy is less entangled with Israel's, but no closer to being independent. There are two economies, conjoined in a colonial relation-

ship, with Israel controlling borders, imports and exports. The donor countries have inadvertently become the enablers of occupation. But if they cut off funds, the first people to suffer would be Palestinians. To build a functioning economy, as Palestinian businessmen have told me, the essential ingredient is political independence for the West Bank and Gaza.

Jerusalem is the one place where the Palestinian-Israel division has blurred, but up to a point. Immediately after the Six-Day War in June 1967, Israel unilaterally annexed East Jerusalem, joining it to the west city and creating a single municipality. The neighbourhoods Israel has built in the annexed areas are home to 200,000 people, over a third of all the Israelis living in occupied territory.

Israeli law applies in East Jerusalem, in contrast to the rest of the West Bank. East Jerusalemites gained the status of Israeli residents. Officially, they can ask for citizenship, but a combination of Israeli bureaucratic hurdles and Palestinian social pressure not to legitimise the annexation makes it rare.

Resident status, though, provides the right to free movement and employment inside Israel. The most reliable estimate is that 35,000 East Jerusalemites work in the west side of the city, according to attorney Daniel Seidemann, a prominent expert on East Jerusalem. If they vanished, he says, "the economy of West Jerusalem would collapse." The east city's Palestinians have grown even more tied to the west city since the Second Intifada, when Israel built a high concrete wall between Jerusalem and the West Bank and set up permanent checkpoints at the entrances to the city. More East Jerusalemites study at Israeli universities and colleges; a growing number of Palestinian professionals work on the Israeli side. More than anywhere else, Jerusalem is where Jews and Palestinians meet daily. More than anywhere else, it is where Israelis cannot avoid the fact that they live in the Middle East rather than Europe.



HMUD HAMS/AFP/GETTY

A Palestinian protester hurls a rock towards Israeli forces during clashes near Shejaiya, an eastern district of Gaza City, December 2015

Frustration and hate lead the "one-state" debate



Bronwen Maddox

Almost no one involved in the deadlock between Israel and the Palestinians talks about a "one-state solution." A "one-state outcome" is the phrase that they might grudgingly invoke—not the preferred path and almost certainly not a "solution" but the destination towards which the region seems to be drifting in the absence of a deal.

"One state" is shorthand for the prospect that there would be a single state from the Jordan river to the Mediterranean sea. That is different from the present, where the state of Israel has also occupied territory in the West Bank and East Jerusalem earmarked for a Palestinian state. It is different from the "two state" goal, the target of diplomacy for more than two decades: the notion of two separate states for Israelis and Palestinians, side by side.

Some, particularly on the European left (Tony Judt, the British historian, was one as Gershom Gorenberg points out), have reached for this as a high ideal: one state, with equal rights for all. But that has been a fringe view. The thrust of international diplomacy since the Oslo Accords of 1993 and 1995 has been to separate two peoples who have each wanted their own land, not to live

with each other.

You hear the "one state" phrase raised again these days, though. You hear it from young Palestinians, who have watched the land that would make up a Palestinian state eaten up by Israeli settlements. This is apartheid, they saywe are ruled by Israel but denied civil rights-invoking the comparison with South Africa that is driving the boycott, divestment and sanctions (BDS) movement. Give us the vote in a single country, they say. You hear it sometimes too, in what may be exploration of future tactics by older Palestinians—a challenge that would be a way of calling Israel's bluff. Mohammed Shtayyeh, a Palestinian politician and economist who has written widely about the erosion of the two-state solution, told *Prospect* in June that there might come a time when switching to a call for one state made sense, if the possibility of a viable Palestinian state finally seemed extinguished.

I find it hard to see that as, at this stage, more than a kind of deliberately hazy testing out of a possible future challenge to Israel, a way of calling its bluff. Bleak as the prospects for a two-state solution are, that is still where all international effort—and formal Israeli and

Palestinian discussion—is still located, because the alternative seems so much worse. The thrust of diplomacy in all kinds of conflicts in recent decades has generally been to separate warring people, not forcibly combine them in a democratic structure (and the examples where that has been tried, such as Iraq, are not encouraging). It's not obvious (to put it mildly) how it would satisfy Israel's security concerns, or what happens to Hamascontrolled Gaza.

The "one-state" idea also runs entirely counter to the Palestinian quest for nationhood and self-determination—a country of their own, not rights within another—which has been the leadership's focus for decades. And however unattractive the notion of a state defined by its religious character is to many (including to many secular Jews), the "one-state" model offends the powerful sense of many Israelis that the point of Israel is that it is a Jewish nation.

I'm with Gershom Gorenberg in finding the two-state solution still the least bad goal, and the alternative resembling a recipe for a war zone. But in the absence of progress—and at the moment, there is none—that will not be the last word.

Bronwen Maddox is Editor of Prospect

And yet, East Jerusalem is still the first circle of the occupation. Jewish residents of Jerusalem rarely visit Arab areas or know their way around them. After years of underfunding, Arab neighbourhoods look more like towns in the Third World than the First World. East Jerusalem's hope for a better future depends on it being the central city in a Palestinian state—as befits its size, location and history—but with an open door to Israel. Only then could it become a bridge rather than a dead end.

Even with the anomaly of Jerusalem, the space between the Mediterranean and the river Jordan is not one state. It consists of Israel—a flawed democracy—and the West Bank, more or less a colony, where settlers from the home country live apart from the local population, under separate laws, pampered by government support that drains Israel's resources. Gaza is a world apart.

This is not a second South Africa. The desire to describe it as such reflects our habit of fitting something complicated and unfamiliar into a category that we already know and then fooling ourselves that we understand it. The situation in Israel and the occupied territories is not apartheid. It is pernicious, but in its own way.

esides being used as a bad description of the present, the one-state concept is used in other ways: as a warning of what Israel will become if a two-state agreement isn't reached soon, or as the only practical way out of the mess since the two-state option is supposedly dead.

I have used the one-state warning myself, but I'm now less convinced that this is where we are inevitably heading. The more likely scenario is that the current situation goes on, which means continued deterioration: increasingly frequent and more violent waves of opposition, in which random civilians are often the victims; more settlers; more damage to democracy inside Israel as the political right works ever harder to silence criticism. This is sufficient reason for change, without the one-state bogeyman.

Among those who describe a single state as the solution, the standard argument is that settlements have grown so large that Israel can't withdraw. "We have grown too late for that," the late historian Tony Judt wrote in a 2003 essay, "Israel: The Alternative," which became a manifesto for "a single, integrated, binational state of Jews and Arabs, Israelis and Palestinians."

Ironically, this is the same claim about settlements used by some Israeli hardliners, for whom it means, "Give it up, world.▶



We've won." To bolster their case, they have a tendency to inflate the number of settlers and deflate the number of Palestinians. Naftali Bennett, head of the hard-right Jewish Home party, said in a 2013 *Washington Post* interview that there were 700,000 Israelis living in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. At the time, the figure given by Bennett was a full 30 per cent higher than the actual number, as Bennett could have learned if he had bothered to check the Israeli government's data.

Still, the most accurate number available for Israelis living beyond the pre-1967 border is 570,000, which seems daunting enough. It's also much larger than the actual number who would need to be evacuated. The spurts of serious negotiations since the 1990s haven't produced a final agreement, but they have developed the principle that one-to-one land swaps between Israel and the new Palestinian state would allow Israel to keep the Jewish neighbourhoods of East Jerusalem and other large settlements close to the pre-1967 border. Depending on the exact map, the number to be evacuated would probably be 150,000 or less. For comparison, Israel absorbed over 180,000 immigrants from the Soviet Union in 1990 alone. The discussion of how to evacuate settlers peacefully would be long, but one idea is to say they could stay put as citizens of Palestine. My guess is that the number who would accept that offer would be in the dozens.

or some one-state advocates, though, the point is not practicality but principle: the ideal is a single polity with equal rights for all, rather than partition into two nation-states. Again, South Africa is their model, and again, the comparison fails. One reason that a single state was feasible there—as Assaf Sharon, assistant professor in the Philosophy Department at Tel Aviv University and co-chair of the left-wing think-tank Molad, recently wrote—is that the African National Congress (ANC) proposed a South Africa that "belongs to all who live in it, black and white," to quote its 1955 Freedom Charter. The re-imagined nation included the white minority.

But there is no Palestinian faction or organisation that pro-

poses a similar programme. "If you look at the history of the Palestinian national movement... it was almost always a struggle for national self-determination rather than a struggle for democracy," says Mouin Rabbani, a senior fellow at the Institute for Palestine Studies. "If you go for democratic equality among Israelis and Palestinians, then clearly you can't have the same level of national self-determination that the ANC ends up getting... If you gave Palestinians today a clear choice, I suspect that most would prefer to live independent of Israelis than in equality with them."

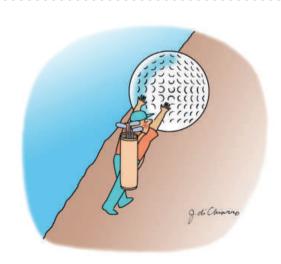
On the Jewish side, likewise, the goal was and remains self-determination. Among Israeli Jews today, support for a one-state outcome is to be found among a small number of academics, farleft activists and expatriate intellectuals.

And if, for a moment, we consider what would happen if a single state were established today, accurate population figures become very important. According to Sergio DellaPergola, an Italian-born Israeli demographer at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Jews presently make up 48.1 per cent of the population between the river Jordan and the Mediterranean. Add in non-Jewish immigrants from the former Soviet Union who identify as part of Jewish society, and the number rises to 52.1 per cent. Besides a small number of African refugees and foreign workers, the rest are Palestinians.

Creating a single state, therefore, would force two national communities, each committed to self-determination, into one polity, with their electoral power virtually balanced. The issue of borders would evaporate. But all the other issues at dispute between them would remain—control of holy places, allocating resources, Israeli settlements built since 1967 in the West Bank, repatriation of Palestinian refugees, and more. This is a plan for escalating the conflict, not solving it.

In no way do I mean to suggest that getting to a two-state agreement would be easy. "It's obvious," says Rabbani, "that the more settlers there are, the more political will" is needed to remove them and reach an accord. Political will for resolving the conflict is in short supply—in Israel, but also in Abbas's vicinity and internationally. Neither the United States nor Europe appear interested in using the political leverage they possess with both Israel and the Palestinians.

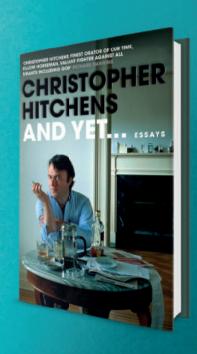
And yet, a two-state accord is still the least difficult path to independence for Palestinians, rehabilitated democracy for Israel and a future where the two sides can meet less grimly than they do at Gush Etzion Junction. \blacksquare



I AM, I HOPE, NEVER OFFENSIVE BY ACCIDENT

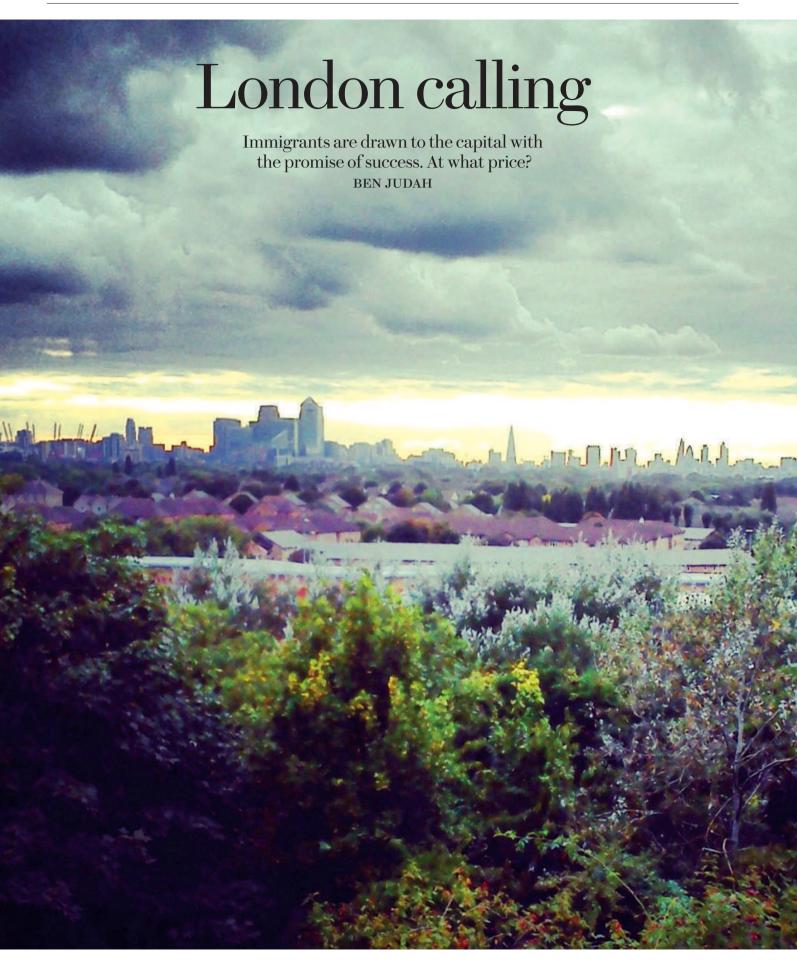
CHRISTOPHER HITCHENS

THE FINAL COLLECTION





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Ben Judah no longer recognises the city in which he was born. In London, 55 per cent of the population is not ethnically British, 40 per cent were born abroad and five per cent live in the shadowy illegal economy. An acclaimed foreign correspondent, Judah decided to investigate the unreported stories on his doorstep by interviewing many recent immigrants. The new London is where Polish builders rail against the Romanians undercutting their prices; where homeless Roma men play the fiddle on the street in exchange for a few pounds; and where Filipino maids look for the chance to escape overbearing Arab employers.

These voices offer an insight into our capital's unreported world. They show us the prejudices of migrants and their aspirations, their cruelties and the cruelties done to them, and what they think of the English people whose houses they build and whose children they look after.

awel does not look like a builder, with his thick black glasses and plush grey mane. Pawel doesn't sound like one either. Inside his overheated white van he talks about communism, literature, politics, chess: everything he lost in 1981 when he became a dissident refugee. He misses those first building days.

"You know what it was like then? Back in the eighties, the nineties, when I was first building, your painter, he would've come from the Warsaw Academy of Fine Arts... You'd tell him to rip off the wallpaper and throw on three thick coats of paint and he would just begin telling you about Polish minimalism. Your bricklayer... He would be a sociologist, talking Hayek when it was tea break."

His voice purrs.

"Those days... When we finished and the sun would come pouring in... Loft conversions were very popular then, that's what I remember... We would have all these nice chats as we cleaned up. The English... hah, they probably thought it was football we were always arguing about so passionately."

Pawel's first job on site was wall painting, in a building trade then run by Irish wide boys. Pawel is one of the old Poles. Today he swerves the corners between his sites. Pawel is one of the winners: one of the make-it-up-as-you-go-along building bosses who benefited from the mass migration of labour in the 2000s.

Pawel knew London wanted bathroom refits for cheap. And he has been rewarded for it. As we hit red lights, he reminisces: how he walked this street when he owned nothing except a small ripped suitcase; when he slept in that mite-infested bedsit. Today he owns a house in Balham, a chalet in France and an apartment in Warsaw.

"I'm not middle class... I'm an immigrant, I'm not part of that." He squints at me. "I'm privileged... I got the chance to be both Polish... and a little English."

Like any mansion builder he knows everything about the rich. "These people... They like the Polish because they hate having the white English inside their house. Those boys, they are so rude. They come in and they go, 'Put the kettle on love,' then sit on the sofa. This make the rich very tense. They like my boys. They are

Ben Judah is the author of "This is London" (Picador), from which this edited extract is taken. He is a Policy Fellow at the European Council on Foreign Relations and the author of "Fragile Empire: How Russia Fell In and Out of Love with Vladimir Putin" (Yale)



silent... They can't speak English, so they're very polite."

Together we drive long afternoons around Pimlico. But these rows of white dolls' houses are not all the same. There are damp flats let out by the council with cracked paint, facing freshly veneered mansions owned by Russians. Pawel knows quite a few of them.

"You know what breaks my heart?"

He glances at me.

"That my job is to destroy London. They call me every week... and every time they want the same thing over the phone. White walls with chrome finish. Minimalist, modernist. That's what the Russians want. The lovely things I rip out... the mouldings, the wallpapers, the carved old basins... You wouldn't even believe."

Pawel has three Pimlico Ukrainians as his clients.

"They come quickly, when they want to buy... And the English, they rip them off every time. They lie to them. 'Yes, Mr Boris, this place is so prestigious. Yes, Mr Boris, this place is so close to the Westminster Palace." He imitates their fawning lisp. "These guys were nervous... they were politicians in Kiev

"You know what breaks my heart?' says Pawel. He glances at me. 'That my job is to destroy London... The lovely things I rip out"

and they needed this money out very quickly. So they believed, the stupid fools, those English suits trying to pick their pocket. Nobody bothered to tell them that opposite is the council terrace, with a hoarder, with rats, with loads of mental-health issues. Never trust an Englishman in property..."

Renovating a £2.5m flat for £7 an hour are a bunch of dreamers. The youngest labourer in the team is a grumpy, heavyset joiner inexplicably called Miner. He is a newcomer, in England since 2009. The boy knows some English. Just about enough to read. Miner was permanently alienated from his life in a cramped flat in Wood Green when a plumber was called in three years ago. The Essex man left $The\ Sun$ next to the radio. Miner opened the paper. He was horrified.

"Why you English always saying things like, 'We like Polish... The Polish so hardworking... The Polish so good.' Why you say this to my face? When I open the paper, I see all lies about Polish. They say Polish stealing, Polish drinking, Polish taking the work... You English only pretend to like Polish... English must be lying when they talk to my face."

Miner is, like almost all builders, an obsessive saver. But he is neurotic about it. He is always on his mobile phone calculating the precise value of his savings. This is because like many of the young Polish migrants he thinks he is only here temporarily. He is saving to build a dream mansion. Miner needs £30,000 but the exchange rate and the influx of Romanian labourers are working against him.

He rolls a cigarette.

"Those Romanian... They are like, how you say... like cowboy. They never have insurance paper. They never make, how you say, the health and the safeties... They working for nothing. Romanians making Polish wages go down... They working for £4 an

hour. The Britain is mad to let them come... The Britain is mad." He groans. "The Romanian, he not the worst... The worst, he is the Albanian. They coming more and more to the London... They are thief. They like work building too. They come find Polish... Go, 'Yes, we pay good, we have good work, one week, two week, easy cash, no problem, no contract... No worries, mate."

He draws breath and begins looking for a framing square.

"Then they throw out Polish... He work maybe one month, but they change job, say, 'You got no contract,' and never give Polish money. The Polish, he gets beaten. My friend, the Albanian they beat him... hitting him, hitting him. He come to me... Teeth is gone. Albanian mans... They are only peoples in London who scares me. They look like white but they are really like Muslim..."

Polish churches are full every Sunday. London was long a city of empty Victorian chapels. These frumpy Gothic naves now echo to Polish mass or Nigerian choirs. Polish churches are full of toddlers and pushchairs. Teary tattooed plumbers cross themselves. Hard-up meat packers shove £20 into the collection boxes for the nuns needing furniture in eastern Poland. Masses are sung for the war in Ukraine.

"Polish people think English churches only very, very weak." I go drinking with Miner. We begin in the newsagent, filling his blue plastic bag with a dozen cans of Lechs. It tears. Traipsing home, Miner shares his confusion about the English.

"Why do they give the benefits? Why £60 a week and a flat for free for the lazy pig... when he no work? Why this happen? Poland... no money for the pig... no nothing for the lazy pig."

Polish builders have little time for the white working class. They think they do not know how to look after themselves. They think they talk like black people. They think they look sick. Like they are going through a very hard time. Some think they are stupid. Polish builders buy food in bulk to make the cheapest packed lunches.

"This is the only way a poor man can eat..."

But why do the English wander into expensive sandwich bars and lose more than one hour's wage for just a meal deal? Polish builders think they are out of their minds to spend three hours' wages on three pints in the pub, when you can get eight tin cans for that, and even drink them in the park with roll ups and everything.

"The English no understand money, I think..."

Miner snatches the police notice in his letterbox. "Fuck! Not again." He quivers in rage. "The black people... They are stealing again!" There has been a robbery in the area. Miner lives in the part of London filled with dirty parades of betting shops, twirling doner kebabs, payday lenders, unlicensed pawnbrokers and signs for we buy gold.

"The black people... They are crazy people."

We crack open the cans. Miner drinks, then grows flushed. "The black people, they like to fight Polish..."

London is home to more than 150,000 Polish migrants, probably. So keen are they to save that little bit extra that many go under the radar to avoid tax. This is why every builder I get to know on site has been burgled. Their flats are always the cheapest, built with flimsy locks. The kind that can be undone in 10 seconds. Sometimes landlords are in on the racket.

Burglars love Poles because they are paid in cash and hide it in shoeboxes. When they see builders and cleaners moving in over the road, they are already laughing. They can sometimes make $\pounds 5,000$ from one bedsit. And they know the Poles will never call the police.



London is home to 150,000 Polish migrants

onight I am waiting for the Fiddler in sodium light outside the Fine & Country estate agent. The Roma are homing in to sleep; they shuffle and stumble on crutches and sticks, sniffling for coins in Russian, Arabic and French. They wheel their belongings in granny trolleys under the bare trees of Hyde Park, and cross their legs under these preposterous, belittling buildings, pleading with their eyes for 50 pees and pound coins. The shape of the Fiddler moves into the light. With a flick of his leather cap, he gestures at me to follow him.

"We are not from this village. I hate those Gypsies. They are thieves. Our village is down at the bottom of Park Lane. At the edge of the streets of the Arabs."

The Fiddler laughs at the map I have made of the area as the traffic swirls past in a static hiss, screened with the immense, winter-dead plane trees in the darkness of Hyde Park. He chortles quietly as we pass an illuminated Americana of boasting concrete, glass and stucco ultra-luxury hotels, overlooking the Serpentine.

The Fiddler stops, and stares at a gleaming Mercedes, where in the white space of a supercar showroom, the lights never go out, be it day or night.

"What struck me first when I came to London, two weeks ago now, were the lights. There are no lights in my village. There are no buildings wrapped in lights. There are no rooms where white lights never go off. The whole two nights on the coach from Romania I was depressed. I curled up and saw my children in my head. The ones I can't feed. But when we arrived in London and the night came and we saw the lights, I felt we had, maybe, a chance to pay back the debts."

I am listening to the Fiddler talk about the first time he played in London. He says he stood right in front of a huge florid department store, the brightest building he could find in all these streets, and began to scrape the violin into a Gypsy melody, up and over, as manicured Arab men, in black tailored coats, gold watches glinting from their wrists, and impossibly leggy Russian women, clutching black leather handbags, passed by Harrods, laughing with each other, in another world.

Fiddler was amazed: "These bright, bright buildings... They are so beautiful. But that night when I went back to the tunnel where we sleep I began to feel scared. I'd made no money and the others were telling me... The night before there was a Polish attack. They said that three drunk builders came into the tunnel and started beating them. They were sleeping when the attack happened. And that night the others had seen those three Poles coming off a building site nearby."

The Fiddler takes me into the underpass.

The encampment from Slobozia is under Hyde Park Corner. The chi-chi stucco and glistening Maseratis are out of sight. We enter subterranean tunnels of cream white tiles. They shine with clinical white lights embedded into the ceiling. These are long and low tunnels. And they are covered with thin line-drawings of the glories of Victorian London. Walls of men in top hats and ladies in flowing frocks. Tiles painted with cavalry charges and country houses. And, in places, if you look closely, they are smeared with blood and shit.

"Those English... They scare me."

The Fiddler points. This is where the smack-heads are. They are mostly northern. And they are dying. There is a girl with a blue sleeping bag who sits under the tiles of the golden coach and horses. She barely looks human, and she hides this in a thick waterproof hood, because her neck has pinched and vanished, and her eyes have swelled up, all glassy and black, on a bulbous head which has lost its hair, so she looks more like an alien. Fiddler says she hardly sleeps.

"All of us from Slobozia are frightened of her."



Over one third of Londoners were born abroad, with half arriving after the millennium

He says they always choose the tunnel furthest away from her, with the pastel-coloured sketches of the garden wing of Buckingham Palace, when they camp down, ripping up and laying down their scavenged cardboard boxes.

"Here we are. This is where we sleep. The rubbish of London." Fiddler is exhausted and confused as the village beds down in the tunnel. He says they have to keep walking until this late, when they are almost faint, otherwise they get told to move on. He says around now is the time the police stop caring. The Fiddler scratches his stubble and his eyes turn to me, sombre. There are 16 of them here in the tunnel; throwing down worn peach and yellow blankets, patterned like summer flowers, between damp duvets.

"I'm worried I am going to be stuck here begging for ever. Here where there could be a Polish attack. Here in the tunnels where people come and go. And the tramps blabber like crazy people."

The Fiddler stares at the others. The villagers all look different. There are gaunt faces and sunken eyes. There are some caked in dirt and others still smooth and bright. Their skin is a yellowish ivory or a tanned brown. And they plead with me to find them work in the stables. The Fiddler starts asking questions for them.

"Is it true that the Queen of England has given an order that the Romanians may never work with her thousand horses? Is it true that the Queen hates us and she thinks we will steal her horses? Please tell her... we can make ironwork, their horseshoes, we can leatherwork the reins. We can do anything with horses."

The pubs are emptying.

Drunk eyes linger on us. A white man with a slick black and grey fringe and red cravat, turns to the Asian woman on his arm, with curly black hair, in a long brown flannel coat, and points at the Fiddler. She turns to him, as they pass, playfully stunned by what she sees. But fumbling through her green leather bag, she finds only copper change.

This enrages the Fiddler.

"I can't take it any more. Today I only made £15. All day I went trying to play the music for the Arabs and they gave me nothing. I saw them coming in and out of the golden places but they gave nothing. They couldn't even see me."

The Fiddler is distraught about the police. They have shocked him. They are white. They are brown. They are even black. And they keep confiscating his money. But there is nothing he can do when he loses a day of fiddling for coins. He barely knows how to say, "Hello, Bye," in English.

Fiddler does not eat. He covers his face with his tattooed hands and starts talking about having been an alcoholic. Things have not turned out the way they should. Fiddler says he has always lived

his life in and out of brawls. Tucked into his pocket is a scuffed and thumbed New Testament. But he doesn't want this. What Fiddler wants is a dictionary. There is no other way to make back the debt.

he Filipinas took weeks to persuade. The bosses are violent, they said. The bosses will fire us, they pleaded. But finally the Filipinas invited me for tea: on one condition. They could only be identified collectively as the Filipinas.

And once that was agreed, they promised me the secrets.

The Filipinas have seen it all: Doha, Abu Dhabi, Dubai. They have seen a thousand skyscrapers, a hundred gleaming airports, and a hundred days of smog. Every Filipina has felt like family; and every Filipina has been slapped like a slave. They have seen every side of them: the master's little smiles, madam when she cries. The Filipinas have seen what they wanted. They have shivered on rolled-out sleeping mats on the balconies of Beirut and sweated trembling on bunk beds in Bahrain.

They are enslaved by the Arabs before they realise what is happening, and they pray and cry and dream that the Arabs will take them to London. Because that's where you can run away.

Auntie Mia would never forget the first hundred runaways: their names, their eyes, their villages. How the girls first heard of her having lunch in the McDonald's or the KFC in St John's Wood (she liked to alternate) she was never entirely sure. Auntie Mia never rushed the girls. Auntie Mia always held their hands: as in the corner of the McDonald's (or the KFC) it all tumbled out—how madam had thrown boiling water at her, how master had raped her, how madam had whipped her, how master had not paid her for nine months. Auntie Mia hugged them—Auntie Mia loved them.

Every weekend the Filipinas come to see Auntie Mia. They come to relax, they come to laugh. With Auntie Mia the tension shakes out into hysterics—unstoppable hysterics. Because all week they are hidden, cowed, silent little women. All week—they are frightened of the line.

Nobody knows where this line is with their master and madam, because the Filipinas who have crossed it have been fired on the spot. All the servants have their own ideas. There

"Nobody knows where the line is with their master, because the Filipinas who have crossed it are fired"

are some that say the line is speaking when not spoken to. There are some that say the line is speaking like a master: questioning, criticising, even asking. There are some that say the line is being seen: a good Filipina is an invisible Filipina.

There was a Filipina in a crooked old mews off High Street Kensington who was receiving hush money. There was a Filipina in Hampstead who had been handed £5,000 to lie. There was a Filipina in St John's Wood who refused three weeks' paid-holiday hush money because she was a Christian and ran in a fury to Auntie Mia to find her a new home.

And every week there are the tears about the children. A few years here; a few years there. And the Filipinas become mothers. And they pass around their smart phones—there are my two Jewish children, these are my lost Arab babies, and here is my two, back then, Italian twins. And they cry, and cry as they pass around their smart phones with the smiling backgrounds of little ones. They bonded: and then they were culled.

And they ask questions. "Please, sister, please—you are now working in the big house in South Kensington. Does my French baby still remember me? Does he still put his head like this? Does he still remember who taught him to brush his teeth? Does he still read *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*? Does he still cry a little when he laughs? Please, sister—ask him if he remember me. Please, sister—kiss him for me."

And then they tell the brave stories. And everybody listens and cheers. And everybody says, "Next time I will be a brave sister like you." And this is something they never expected to see: the punching, the kicking, the swearing—the men, the rich men, the men who have everything—they are hurting their women like the men who have nothing. And they hide this from everyone: apart from their Filipinas.

There was the millionaire in Hampstead that punched his pregnant wife. There was a drinker banker in Notting Hill who would come home and smash his cutlery and hurt everyone—the banker would even hurt his children. The beaters and the drinkers: they were no different from the beaters and drinkers in the shacks of Manila. They are cowards. They are always cowards: these men who lash out at women.

And every week they come and tell Auntie Mia: "Auntie, Auntie, they treat us like appliances, like one of their appliances, which are made of metal, and even these sometimes break, and what about us, us who are made of flesh—we are the ones who are never allowed to have a breakdown." And Auntie Mia hugs them.

As the afternoon becomes dark and the lights are switched on, the Filipinas talk about managing madam. About how sometimes madam throws out all her perfumes—hundreds of little bottles—and they scrabble out to the bins when she is asleep to scoop them up. About how unfair it was when madam threw away her Filipina for grabbing dozens of dresses out of the recycling bags, which she was supposed to have taken to the charity shop on High Street Kensington.

But lots of Filipinas have nothing to gossip about. They are the Filipinas of empty mansions that they have to clean, day in, day out. They know every nook, every cranny, every alarm, every alcove. They know how the light falls in the master bedroom and where the chimney draughts rush across the living rooms in winter. These are the Filipinas of the golden cage.

But they are not fools. They get to know everything. They understand the security. They come to trust the guards. Every year, in the dead of winter, when master and madam are in the warm islands—there are the Filipina balls. Those nights in winter, the streets in Mayfair are silent and cool like an ancient tomb. The street lamps come on but house lights and fireplaces do not follow them. There is nobody here. And this is when the brave ones, the clever ones, open the doors—and they stand under those colonnade steps in white women's clothes and welcome other Filipinas into the warmth of the winter ball.

Walking up the stairs into the mansions of Mayfair, they look beautiful in clothes as precious as diamonds which madam never wears. And inside they are singing, the curtains thrown open to enormous views of the parks. And the Filipinas are laughing—their smiles across the black canvas of the night.



"Good news gentlemen—the wrongdoing that the company was accused of has been proven to be merely an <u>appearance</u> of wrongdoing."

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The Empire strikes back

We should stop thinking of colonialism as exclusively good or bad tristram hunt

y far the most striking work in Tate Britain's compelling recent exhibition, *Artist and Empire: Facing Britain's Imperial Past*, was Elizabeth Butler's depiction of an exhausted, slumped British Army surgeon being slowly carried back to base after the catastrophic 1842 retreat from Kabul. The First Anglo-Afghan War was one of the great catastrophes of British imperial adven-

turism and Butler's *The Remnants of an Army* (1872) captures perfectly the expedition's mixture of futility, incompetence and arrogance. It is a picture that speaks purposefully to Bernard Porter and Stephanie Barczewski's new accounts of the representation of heroic failure and the lingering impact of imperialism on British culture. Yet its theme, imagery

and place at the Tate serve only to contradict much of what is argued in each of these ultimately unsatisfying books.

This is not a bad time to be exploring the legacies and meanings of British colonialism, as we seem to be embarking on a renewed bout of Empire-angst. Even as imperial scholars are stressing more and more the plural, hybrid and diverse nature of the British Empire—a historical event that encompassed racist brutality in Jamaica together with an Anglo-Saxon "kith and kin" white commonwealth; the treaty ports of China together with the plantations of Ulster; the industrial capitalism of Bombay together with the "civilising mission" of David Livingstone—the contemporary public debate is still tediously divided along good versus evil matrices.

In Amsterdam, the Rijksmuseum is in the middle of a programme called "Adjustment of Colonial Terminology"—which entails renaming hundreds of artworks to rid them of archaic, orientalist, offensive or racist nomenclature. Pictures with titles that include the words "Indian," "Mohammedan," or even "dwarf" are being systematically retitled by the curators. Meanwhile, at Oxford University, "Rhodes rage" has made its way from the campuses of Cape Town and KwaZulu-Natal to Oriel College with demands for the removal of the Cecil Rhodes statue on account of his colonial crimes. Leading the "Rhodes Must Fall" charge in Oxford has been the South African student and,

ahem, Rhodes scholar Ntokozo Qwabe—who has also made the case for banning the French Tricolore from universities after the Paris attacks, "in the same way that the presence of a Nazi flag would have to be fought against." Finally, there was more than a whiff of the colonial mindset in the publication of Oliver Letwin's notorious 1985 memo, as he extemporised on the "bad moral attitudes" prevalent among inner-city black Britons whose entre-

preneurial ambitions could stretch only to "discos and drugs."

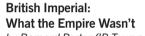
For Porter, the willingness of commentators to place all these controversies within an exclusively colonial paradigm speaks to the intellectual short-comings of so much imperial discourse. Ever since the publication of his controversial history, *The Absent-Minded Imperial*-

ists, Porter has been doggedly downplaying the domestic impact of empire. With scholarly skill and polemical verve, he has long argued that other identities and discourses (class, gender, faith, liberalism) overshadowed the imperial turn. Arguing that British history 1850-1950 was predominantly framed by the British Empire constitutes a mistaken misreading of the past.

This new work endorses that approach, but has a different feel. It is the text of a historian of a certain age, drawing together the threads of a successful professorial career. Like a retiring ambassador's final telegram, it is full of brio and confidence, refreshingly free of academic-ese or footnotitis, but also a bit thin on argument and evidence. In essence, it is a superb long-form essay for undergraduates coming fresh to the imperial battlefield—and Porter wants to capture them for his own platoon before anyone else twists their minds.

His thesis remains that the bulk of the British population was unconcerned with empire. The small minority that was engaged in the imperial project can be divided between the "liberal," who drove the expansion of empire for profit, and the "feudal," who sought to control it for the colonial people's good. The liberals were the middle classes; the feudal, the upper classes. But the inherent contradiction in the form was that "from its very origins the British Empire had been built on a misunderstanding: that imperial power, formal or informal, could be exerted cheaply, so as not to hamper enterprise, and liberally, so as not to offend against most Britons' most fundamental values." In short, the British Empire was often expensive and frequently illiberal—and, hence, attracted limited support.

If Porter's previous works had entailed an extensive conversation with the Victorian historian John Robert Seeley (who



by Bernard Porter (IB Taurus & Co, £20)

Heroic Failure and the British by Stephanie Barczewski (Yale University Press, £20)





"A perfect mix of futility, incompetence and arrogance": Elizabeth Butler's The Remnants of an Army (1872)

famously described the British as having "conquered half the world in a fit of absence of mind"), the defining figure in this book is John A Hobson, the Edwardian economist. It was Hobson who understood imperialism, in a conceit that Vladimir Lenin would lift, as a higher form of capitalism. Under the sway of imperial power, Victorian free trade was heading towards monopoly capitalism. And Porter is equally keen for us now to understand the triumph of modern global capital as the inev-

"Porter argues that 'After the end of empire, capitalism simply dismounted and bounded on, under the guise, now, of globalisation"

itable outcome of Empire. "Formal imperialism was a useful mount for international capitalism for a while," he explains. But then, after the end of empire, capitalism "simply dismounted and bounded on, under the guise, now, of 'globalisation." It is an argument that allows Porter to paint Tony Blair and George W Bush as the modern-day inheritors of the imperial mantle, as the dividing line between imperialism and capitalism—the Pen-

tagon and Haliburton—becomes ever murkier. "In a way British imperialism morphed into the American version, with leadership usually going to the Americans; or else into more amorphous but still powerful forces largely out of the control of either, characterised as 'multinational companies,' or 'international capitalism.'" And that, for Porter, is the real enemy.

On the domestic history of empire, Porter is adamant there was no imperial project pursued by the political class; no popular feeling driving imperialism; and the British Empire "was never quite as 'imperial' as it looked," with its mix of passivity, accident and absent-mindedness. And while such scepticism does provide a useful antidote to the intellectual certainties of the imperial-academic complex, I am sceptical of the scholarship.

When Porter writes, for instance, of soldiers returning from imperial wars to indifference or ignominy, I think of the remarkable series of march-pasts the Boer War troops took part in. He suggests that English schools treated Empire Day, "only as a holiday, with very little patriotic content." But that certainly was not the case in Liverpool, for example, where the *Daily Post* reported how "head teachers addressed the children upon the true significance of patriotism and imperialism," and thousands of school-children paraded through the playground in a colonial pageant. His suggestion that "representations of the Empire in the 'fine' arts are surprisingly sparse" is readily disproven by the Tate exhibition. And when Porter highlights a library of authors who



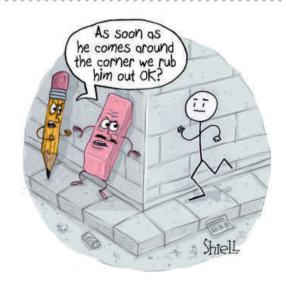
Yinka Shonibare's Nelson's Ship in a Bottle on display in Trafalgar Square

were unaffected by empire, it was probably a mistake to include Arthur Conan Doyle. "You have been in Afghanistan, I perceive?" is Holmes's opening line to Watson, a veteran of the Second Anglo-Afghan War, immediately pointing to an assumed colonial pre-history.

The physical, rather than literary, presence of empire in the Victorian public sphere is where Barczewski's book begins. And her quest is to discover why the British were so drawn to commemorating the heroic failures of the age of expansion—the likes of Captain Robert Scott and General Charles Gordon, the Charge of the Light Brigade and David Livingstone. The answer, it seems, was to help provide a coping mechanism for the grubby realities of empire. For, "at the points where the Empire failed to live up to its ideals, it challenged not only the efficacy of colonial administration, but also national values and self-conceptions." Celebrating epic failure offered a chance of putting a positive moral vision on the imperial project and confidently celebrating an ethical British identity. "As the British sought to create a vision of themselves as an imperial nation that could fulfil its idealised vision of itself as a benevolent and just ruler rather than a tyrannical conqueror, failure could be a very useful thing to highlight."

t is fair to say that Porter would have some misgivings about the approach Barczewski pursues, with its implicit assumptions about a codified imperial project and tendency to marshal all the evidence under a colonial banner. But she provides good enough accounts of the life and cultural representation of various Victorian explorers and soldiers, a large number of whom ended up in statues dotted round Waterloo Place.

Barczewski ends her study with a vague suggestion that post-imperial Britain might be able to shed some of its fixation with heroic failure as the geo-political justifications have disappeared. But perhaps it would have been more interesting if she had wandered from Waterloo Place to Trafalgar Square to reflect on how the Fourth Plinth project has seen a masterful re-imagining of the British colonial legacy in the very heart of the Empire. Sculptures by the likes of the Anglo-Nigerian artist, Yinka Shonibare, have sought to challenge and re-interpret the history and meaning of Trafalgar in profoundly interesting ways. Indeed, so popular was Shonibare's stunning Africanisation of HMS Victory, *Nelson's Ship in a Bottle*, it was bought up for the National Maritime Museum in Greenwich. The statues of Havelock, Napier and Nelson were not renamed or pulled down; instead, the story of empire was added to. For in the wise words of historian Linda Colley, "one of the reasons why we all need to stop approaching empire in simple 'good' or 'bad' thing terms, and instead think intelligently and enquiringly about its many and intrinsic paradoxes, is that versions of the phenomenon are still with us."



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Losing the war on bugs

Fake, or substandard medicine—some peddled by criminal gangs is a big but hidden cause of antibiotic resistance ELIZABETH PISANI

n the infectious disease wards of Ho Chi Minh City's main hospital for tropical illnesses, patients are arranged behind plate-glass windows like mannequins in a department store. Those that are conscious stare blankly through the glass that separates them and their frightening pathogens—cryptococcal meningitis, perhaps, or septicae-mia—from the efficient hum of nurses and orderlies on the ward. A runner comes in and hands a doctor a sheaf of papers, the latest batch of results from the microbiology lab.

For the glassed-in patients—the hospital's most serious cases—these reports are rarely encouraging. The pathogens that have colonised their blood, lungs, or tissues have evolved their way around every drug that could have been used to combat them. And researchers working on the frontline of resistance blame the mutant bugs, in part, on fake and second-rate medicines.

This may be happening far away, but it is the west's problem too. In these days of global tourism, travel and migration, drugresistant bacteria are highly mobile. "Humans think a lot of themselves," said Paul Newton, professor of tropical medicine at Oxford University, who works out of a microbiology lab in Vientiane, the capital of Laos. "But in fact we're really just exoskeletons for bacteria. They take cheap flights as often as we do."

No-longer curable variants of bugs bred in Ho Chi Minh City may be coming to a hospital near you. In 2008, an especially nasty genetic mutation that made several bacteria resistant to multiple classes of antibiotic was identified in a Swedish patient returning from India (hence its name, New Delhi metallo-beta-lactamase 1, or NDM-1). It was found in Britain that same year, and by 2013, in over 70 other countries. And it is not the only such infection to come to Europe. Multi-drug resistant staphylococcus, third-generation cephalosporin-resistant E.coli and K.pneumoniae have also travelled the world. At the last count, these infections and other resistant ones were already killing 25,000 Europeans a year—without measuring newer imports, such as NDM-1.

In recent years, there has been much wailing and gnashing of teeth about the advent of superbugs that have outwitted the drugs made to treat them. The UK added the threat of antimicrobial resistance to the National Risk Register for the first time in March 2015, worrying that "without effective antibiotics, even minor surgery and routine operations could become high-risk procedures." If bacteria with mutations such as NDM-1 were rife, doctors would hesitate to recommend hip replacements or even chemotherapy: the risk of becoming infected with untreata-

ble bacteria would be too high. In December 2014, a government-commissioned review on antimicrobial resistance warned that drug-resistant pathogens could slice 3.5 per cent off the world's output by 2050, as well as putting 10m people into early graves every year.

Many reasons are given for this looming threat. Bugs evolve faster than drugs do. Unfortunately, there is little money in developing these drugs. Antibiotics drive their own obsolescence—the more that are sold, the more bacteria resist them. Their revenue potential is limited, as they should be prescribed sparingly, are only taken for a few days, and governments limit their price. And when doctors overprescribe antibiotics or patients take them without prescription antimicrobial resistance is boosted, especially if patients stop taking the pills the moment they feel better.

Another contributing factor is environment—in Southeast Asia, humans and animals are crowded together at close quarters in a climate that favours the growth of pathogens. But in the microbiology lab in that Ho Chi Minh City hospital, they have an additional explanation for what they are finding in their lab.

There, tiny bottles of red liquid—blood mixed with a culture medium—are upended in an incubator that looks for all the world like a wine fridge in a doll's house. The contents of some bottles are bubbling gently, indicating something is living in the blood—namely, an infection. Bacteria isolated from fizzy blood will be smeared over agar in a Petri dish and dotted with white discs, each marked with a three-letter antibiotic code. This test seeks to identify whether that particular bacterium is susceptible to each of the drugs. If yes, a clear halo will form in the red agar around the drug disc. More and more, the lab techs are reporting no halos, even for relatively newfangled antibiotics.

"It's those Indian drugs," says Dr Nguyen Phu Huong, a microbiologist, shaking her head with its 1930s bob in disapproval. "They are not strong enough for the bacteria."

"Indian drugs" is local shorthand for cheap, generic drugs not only from India but countries like China and Brazil. In the last decade or so, since these nations cranked up their pharmaceutical industries, their drugs have flooded market stalls across much of Asia and Africa. They are sold in tubs, blister packs, or mixed together in multicoloured cocktails and held in unlabelled plastic bags. Some are branded, others aren't. Some have sell-by dates and instruction leaflets, others don't. Even the ones stamped "BY PRESCRIPTION ONLY" can almost always be bought without a prescription. Many of these are good quality medicines which work just fine. But some are not. And the poor quality medicines are now eating into the effectiveness of medicines that once worked perfectly well.

Here's why: as they reproduce, pathogens mutate. Some of those mutations will make them more resistant to medicines.





Adult Intensive Care Ward at the Hospital for Tropical Diseases, Ho Chi Minh City

But the mutant pathogens usually don't reproduce as fast as the susceptible ones. If you take the correct dose of a drug and kill the susceptible pathogens quickly, the mutants never reach critical mass and die out too. But if you take only a partial, "sub-therapeutic" dose, enough susceptible bugs will survive to prolong the infection. The mutants now have less competition from susceptible strains, and more time to reproduce, build up numbers and get passed on to someone else.

Patients can expose bugs to sub-therapeutic doses by not taking the full course of a medicine. But they can also do it more unwittingly, by taking poor quality medicines. That includes medicines that have lost their potency over time—perhaps because they have been stuck in a very hot shipping container for months, then left in the sunshine of a market stall or the dank corner of a bathroom. It includes medicines that are badly formulated and don't dissolve correctly, restricting the amount of active ingredient that reaches the bloodstream. Finally, it includes medicines that never contained enough of their active ingredient, the result of sloppy manufacturing, or, more troublingly, outright fraud.

Welcome to the quagmire, where the global health community fears to tread. Here, out-and-out criminals overlap with pharmaceutical firms that cut corners while regulators turn a blind eye. Rabid non-governmental organisations (NGOs) see a Big Pharma conspiracy behind every attempt to assure quality,

and western governments, facing mounting health bills, are terrified of undermining the credibility of generic medicines.

Trying valiantly to chart this quagmire is a small band of scientists who have coalesced around Paul Newton, the Oxford professor in Laos. He and his colleagues first became mired in the swamp of bad medicines a decade ago, pushed into it by the prospect of a global resurgence in malaria.

In the mid-2000s, a researcher named George Watt, working on the Thai-Cambodian border, noticed that malaria patients treated with an artemisinin-based medicine were taking twice as long as expected to clear the parasite from their bloodstreams. One possible explanation was that the disease was developing resistance to the cure. This was massively worrying because artemisinin, an antimalarial compound which Chinese scientists isolated from the sweet wormwood plant in the 1970s, was the only drug left that worked against malaria worldwide.

It was also massively plausible, because the Thai-Cambodian border is the historical epicentre of drug-resistant malaria. The first cases of resistance to the cheap and widely-used drug chloroquine were identified in this region in the 1960s (some believe because small doses of it had been introduced to the salt supply as a preventative). Resistance to sulfadoxine-pyrimethamine sprang up here, then mefloquine; no one has a good explanation why. So when Watt reported his findings to a meeting held by the World Health Organisation (WHO) in Phnom Penh in 2007, alarm \blacktriangleright

bells clanged, and scientists went into overdrive trying to find out whether artemisinin was losing its power or not.

But Newton asked a different question. Was it possible that patients weren't responding to artemisinin because they weren't actually taking it? Colleagues working in Cameroon thought that what looked like chloroquine resistant malaria may have been the result of fake drugs. Long before Watts reported his findings, Newton had begun to investigate implausibly cheap tablets

"Quite a few 'antimalarials' have no active ingredients at all, but manufacturers have also filled pills with cheap anti-malarials less effective than those on the label"

of artesunate (an artemisinin derivative) for sale in Cambodia. Though he had access to the overcrowded markets and sweltering hole-in-the-wall shops where many Asians buy their medicines, he didn't have the sophisticated equipment needed to test the pills.

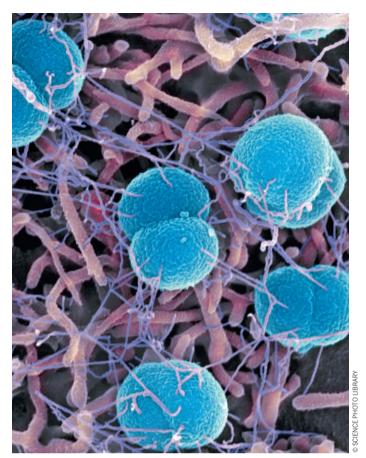
Newton's lab is based in an elegant, crumbling hospital on the banks of the Mekong. His office totters with papers that seem to have been accumulating since the lab was built in 1920—here a pile of medical journals grown crispy with age, there a Japanese monograph about scrub typhus from the 1950s. A man of shy good humour, he could have walked out of the pages of a Graham Greene novel. His timekeeping is erratic and he shuffles around the lab in mismatched knock-off Crocs, grunting encouragingly at the staff and trying to appear undemanding.

For all his diffidence, Newton can be magnetic. With a tiny budget and a lot of charm, he pulled together a multinational team of chemists, police officers, drug regulators and forensic analysts who had the equipment and skills to check what kind of pills the people sweating with malaria fevers were taking.

What they found were a lot of fakes.

Collecting samples from across Southeast Asia, his team started by looking at packaging, comparing a genuine example of a drug with the ones they had bought. In one case, packs marked "12 Tabs" were fake—the real version (12 Tabs.) ended in a full stop. They found misspelled brand names, and expiry dates that preceded manufacturing dates. Using microscopes, they spotted packs printed by silkscreen rather than the offset printing used by pharmaceutical companies. They found holograms which worked when tilted top-to-bottom instead of right-to-left.

Next, Facundo Fernandez, a professor of biotechnology at Georgia Institute of Technology in the United States, analysed the content of pills by zapping them with electrons and looking at the computer-generated patterns that emerged, a technique known as mass spectrometry. Different molecules show up as different peaks on the output graphs, so it is fairly easy to see what the active ingredients of a substance are. Yet one of the earlier samples Fernandez looked at had a shape that no one in the lab could identify at first: it wasn't the artemisinin derivative they expected, and it didn't look like quinine, Tylenol or anything else that they were used to finding in falsified drugs either. "After about two weeks, a PhD student came back and said: I think it's Viagra." Fernandez laughed ruefully. "We'd never looked at life-



"Humans are just exoskeletons for bacteria": Neisseria meningitidis bacteria (blue), the cause of meningococcal meningitis

style drugs before. That was years ago, before we were sensitised to this kind of thing." Now, virtually nothing surprises the team.

The drugs also contained pollen—which proved vital to tracing their source. Palynology, the study of pollen, is a pretty abstruse speciality but Dallas Mildenhall, a New Zealand-based scientist now in his 70s, has used it to solve crimes from art theft to murder. His analysis identified the trees involved. Walnut, wing nut and hickory trees sweep down from northern China to the Myanmar border. Wormwood, elms, wattles and firs are common further south, but creep up into China in areas north of Vietnam and Myanmar. When Mildenhall found pollen from both of these groups, he determined that they were most likely made in the zone of overlap, in southern China.

ost commonly, the fake pills do contain the expected drugs, though often not in the correct doses. Quite a few "antimalarials" have no active ingredient at all, but manufacturers have also filled pills with cheap anti-malarials less effective than those on the label, or drugs that reduce fever. "I think they use those deliberately to bring down fever so the patient doesn't suspect," said Fernandez. Newton was unconvinced. "My feeling is they've got a bunch of leftover powder that need using up. You use what you've got lying around, and bugger the consequences."

There seems to be a lot of white powder lying around. Fernandez has found anti-malarials containing banned carcinogens, for example. Also levamisole, which is often cut together with cocaine and has been linked to necrosis syndrome and the rotting of flesh in the earlobes and cheeks. And safrole, a precursor to \triangleright



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Professor Paul Newton, the Oxford scientist and malaria expert, outside the microbiology laboratory at the Mahosot Hospital Wellcome Trust Research Unit in Vientiane

the party drug ecstasy. "If the untreated malaria doesn't kill you, the other ingredients in these fake pills might well," said Newton.

For Aline Plançon, head of Interpol's pharmaceutical crime division, that is one of the signs that old school drug cartels are in the game. "We have a lot of evidence now that some of the well-established criminal organisations who specialise in narcotics are getting into fake medicines." This business, she notes, offers massive profits with a low risk of ending up behind bars. "They don't pay tax, they don't pay for manufacturing standards or quality control, and often they don't even pay for an active ingredient, so it's not that hard to make a lot of money," said Plançon.

Working together, this collective of self-appointed "drug detectives" assembled the evidence. Then Ronald Noble, the secretary general of Interpol, took the scientists' dossier to the head of China's Public Security Bureau. Artemisinin was a Chinese discovery and a major contribution to the world's health. Now, Noble reported, it was being undermined by Chinese counterfeiters. And they were targeting Chinese brands, which could damage business for genuine manufacturers such as Guilin Pharma, a company which has had two of its antimalar-

ial drugs pre-qualified by the WHO (this means they have met standards of quality, safety and efficacy). The company also had the largest production capacity for artemisinin-derived antimalarials in the world. That was in 2006; the Chinese authorities, still smarting from the SARS crisis, immediately launched a criminal investigation. They identified a network of pharmaceutical crime and jailed several people.

This response was gratifying to the scientists, demonstrating that authorities were willing to respond to pharmaceutical crime, at least when it involved cut-and-dried "bad guys." Yet this scrutiny of antimalarials revealed a grim symmetry between the way drug cops wrestle with gangs that produce fake drugs and the way drugs try to tame pathogens. In both cases, the forces of control are faced with an opponent that seems lighter on its feet, much more adaptable, and very hard to get the better of.

To help spot fake drugs, scientists working with Newton developed simple tests that changed colour if the expected active ingredients was present. One of the criminals' first responses was to put in just enough medicine to fool the tests. More recent studies of antimalarials in Southeast Asia have found no obvious fakes: no pills made only of yellow paint, or of cheap chloroquine masquerading as more expensive artemisinin. They have, however, found a surge in poor quality medicines. A recent study found that three quarters of antimalaria pills in Cambodia had sub-therapeutic levels of active ingredients—and the researchers didn't even test for dissolution. Formulat-

ing pills so that they dissolve correctly is very tricky; many of the pills that contained the right amount of drug were probably delivering them in doses too small to cure but big enough to encourage resistance.

It is an open question how many of these "poor quality" medicines are the work of criminals who deliberately manufacture shoddy products. Much of that question hovers over India, the world's third largest producer of pharmaceuticals by volume and its biggest exporter of generic medicines. In the words of whistleblower Dinesh Thakur, a former executive at the Indian generics producer Ranbaxy. "There's no doubt that [some Indian pharmaceutical firms] use one set of standards for making product for advanced western markets and one for sale in poor countries, including India." Thakur turned a spotlight on appalling production errors and outright fraud by his former employer, including medicines laced with ground glass, and drug safety test results that were made up. The US Justice Department launched an investigation that lasted nearly nine years. Eventually, in 2013, Ranbaxy admitted wrongdoing and paid a fine of \$500m; it continues to sell its drugs into the American market.

The deliberate production of low-quality drugs by licensed manufacturers makes policing sub-standard medicines very difficult. "We can't criminalise all sub-standard drugs, because we want manufacturers to own up quickly when there has been a genuine error," said Mick Deats, a former City of London Police officer who now runs a WHO system that alerts health authorities to reports of bad drugs. "But in some cases you see a pattern of consistently low quality. Then you're out of the accidental and back in to the criminal. The level of evidence you need to tackle that, though, it's just extraordinary."

Perhaps. But India's drug regulatory authority doesn't seem to be setting the bar very high in the first place. It says no action should be taken against a manufacturer who produces medicines that include at least 70 per cent of the stated active ingredient—a level that would do much to promote resistance for many pathogens and that would never meet European standards.

Yet for all this, India is still performing an important service. Besides feeding a giant domestic market, the country exports over \$15bn worth of pharmaceuticals each year, almost all of them generics. Good generic medicines are made with the same ingredients as a big-name drug, usually after the patent on the

"Only five countries in all sub-Saharan Africa have a lab that meets WHO standards for drug quality testing"

original brand has expired. Many generics manufacturers go through a rigorous WHO-monitored pre-qualification process, and operate to the same standards as the best-known companies. But their products are a lot cheaper, because they don't need to recoup huge research, trial and marketing costs.

Drugs that would be unaffordable if bought from the pharmaceutical giants that invested millions in their development are now within reach for poor people and poor countries. This makes generic manufacturers the darlings of health activists, and the bane of innovative companies. Ironically, the entrenched antipathy between these two groups is protecting the manufacturers of bad generics; vociferous NGOs see Big Pharma behind every attempt to impose higher standards. "There seems to be a belief in some NGOs that companies that make generics are philanthropic organisations," said Newton. "But they're making drugs for exactly the same reason as Big Pharma, to make a profit. They are flawed capitalist enterprises like any other." Big Pharma, for its part, is stuffed with slick-suited marketing executives happy to broadcast the flaws of generic medicines to help undermine patients' confidence in them.

Regulators in wealthy countries don't want to focus public attention on the quality of generic medicines because their public health systems prescribe them to keep costs down. Dinesh Thakur recognises the political dilemma facing drug regulatory agencies. "Most regulators are walking a fine line between assuring good manufacturing practice and the availability of drugs. Access to affordable drugs is very politically charged right now."

"Access to medicines" is still more of a mantra than "access to good quality medicines." Thakur, who now heads Medassure Global Compliance Corporation, a company which helps drug manufacturers source high quality ingredients, said that Indian pharmaceutical companies are taking advantage of that zeitgeist to avoid being held to higher standards. Others agree. Every time the WHO tries to take on the issue of drug quality, the Indian government objects.

Kees De Joncheere, the WHO's director of essential medicines and health products, avoids pointing fingers at individual countries. "Look, no minister of health deliberately wants to have low quality products on their market, that's clear. But when we talk about good manufacturing practice, well, how safe is safe enough? There's a perception in some quarters that some countries are putting up manufacturing standards so that others can't compete."

roducer countries don't have any obligation to guarantee the quality of the drugs they send abroad: the rule is buyer beware. But many importing countries don't have the means to check what they buy—only five countries in all of sub-Saharan Africa have a laboratory that meets WHO standards for drug quality testing. One proposal, borrowed from the airline industry, is to make the countries responsible for the safety of the medicines they produce, no matter where they will be sold. Airlines that come from countries with poor safety standards are subject to blanket bans in other countries, regardless of the standards at an individual airline. This solution is fairly simple, but politicians haven't had the courage to push for it.

Ranbaxy-style scandals notwithstanding, rich countries are good at assuring the quality of the drugs they import. That has made them complacent about the fact that people in other countries are taking medicines that don't work. It doesn't help that the studies by Newton and his colleagues that first turned the spotlight on bad drugs were about antimalarials; malaria doesn't kill voters in rich countries and politicians paid little attention.

Many of the pathogens now building up resistance because of poor quality drugs in Ho Chi Minh City, Lagos and Chennai will spread worldwide. When they arrive in Europe, they will be treated with good-quality medicines that will no longer work. Everyone, everywhere, should be able to trust the medicines they take. But for rich countries, improving the quality of the medicines consumed in the developing world is also a matter of self-preservation. If we don't do more to support higher production standards in India and elsewhere, bad bugs will continue to spread the world over.



"I'm just starting my February retox."

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Technician of survival

Julian Barnes brings to life the troubled inner world of Dmitri Shostakovich, finds Catriona Kelly

The Noise of Time

by Julian Barnes (Vintage, £14.99)

The life of Dmitri Dmitrievich Shostakovich is at once well-documented and elusive. Famous from an early age, the Russian composer was surrounded for his whole life by family, musicians, pupils, enemies and admirers; he attracted the attention of the formidable Soviet surveillance machine at every level. Material traces, including an apartment museum in Moscow, abound. Yet he also skids away from definition. The latest to re-interpret his life is Julian Barnes, whose new novel *The Noise of Time* is structured round three crucial episodes in Shostakovich's struggle with state power.

In private photographs and in the recollections of those closest to him in his later years, Shostakovich has the reserved intensity of his late chamber music. But in some moods, according to the disputed but likely in some respects accurate memoirs of the musicologist Solomon Volkov, he could be both hilarious and pungent. Winding his way through a dangerous patronage culture, he has often been understood as a martyr to the totalitarian state. But he is also psychologically comparable with figures such as Alexander Pushkin and Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. Interpreting such artists exclusively in terms of encoded self-revelation and concealed irony-as Shostakovich often is-would certainly not do justice to their intentions or intelligence.

Current academic study tends to avoid the hunt for "the real Shostakovich" (a kind of perpetuation of state surveillance) in favour of a historical understanding. The archives have not preserved the young boy's school reports, but they confirm his near-contemporary Boris Lossky's account. Shostakovich attended what was known officially as a commercial school, but the title was a flag of convenience: the syllabus was shaped by the strong contemporary interest among educated Russians in "free education," and it even had its own Montessori kindergarten. The emphasis on self-directed study, per-

sonal development and community spirit had its echoes later in his life.

Shostakovich was certainly not purely a victim—he managed, after all, to outlive no fewer than three Soviet leaders, while many of his artistic contemporaries preceded even Vladimir Lenin into the grave. As well as being moulded by his era, he helped to construct it. Marina Frolova-Walker, Jonathan Walker, Kiril Tomoff and others have illuminated the circumstances in which the Soviet Union's foremost composer lived and worked. Yet the surroundings only make the man at the centre seem less substantial. Laurel Fay's scholarly biography, recording what is known for certain, is at once scrupulous and dry.

Myth-making annoys historians, but perhaps annoyed Shostakovich less. His Soviet biographer, Sofya Khentova, claimed that Shostakovich had recalled raptly listening to Lenin's speech at the Finland Station on

"Shostakovich was certainly not purely a victim—he managed, after all, to outlive no fewer than three Soviet leaders"

3rd April 1917: Volkov recollects Shostakovich saying he'd ended up in the crowd by mistake and hadn't known what the fuss was about; Fay, following Lossky, states that Shostakovich was never there at all-by the time Lenin arrived, a nicely brought up 10-year-old would have been safely tucked up in bed. The third version is much the most convincing. But that doesn't disprove that Shostakovich told the other stories, or even, to some extent, believed them. Like many who witnessed the Revolution (particularly the February Revolution) as a child, he had a genuine enthusiasm for popular upheaval and mass action all his life, if not necessarily for what resulted from that

great political turmoil. Sticking to the facts can mean, at some level, missing the point.

Where historians subside into embarrassed silence, novelists speak. In The Noise of Time, the different variants of the Lenin story are among many pointers to the fluidity of Shostakovich's relations with his past: "These days, he no longer knew what version to trust. He lies like an eyewitness, as the story goes." In an anecdote that frames the novel and is also repeated within it, three men drink a vodka toast on a wartime station platform: "one to hear, one to remember, and one to drink." The Shostakovich of Barnes's imagining includes all three: the barely surviving crippled alcoholic, limbless on his trolley, practising "a technique for survival"; the bespectacled listener who offers him vodka with egregious courtesy; and the anonymous witness, who disappears even from recollection after the desultory encounter.

Not that Barnes's purpose is anything to do with allegory. But The Noise of Time, largely based on memoirs (those collected by Elizabeth Wilson as well as Solomon Volkov's) is a book about Shostakovich's memories, rather than a straightforward fictional account of his life. Complaining that the Leningrad symphony doesn't figure, or that Barnes omits Shostakovich's work as a teacher of composition, or as a deputy of the Supreme Soviet (and a conscientious one) would be obtuse. It would be equally otiose to point out that as well as agonising over his new version of Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk, Shostakovich negotiated hard over the 1966 film version and insisted only the Kiev production was used. The Noise of Time is a distillation of experience into insomniac self-questioning, or the vertiginous doubt, otkhodnyak, that succeeds the temporary confidence of a vodka high. The mode is interior monologue, but in the third person sometimes used about themselves by particularly sensitive individuals alienated, lifelong, from their own lives.

"It had got to the point when he despised being the person he was, on an "



Reserved intensity: a portrait of Shostakovich by Frances Broomfield (2003) $\,$



Shostakovich with fellow composers Sergei Prokofiev (left) and Aram Khachaturian (right)

almost daily basis," a Shostakovich in his fifties reflects. This self-distancing permeates *The Noise of Time*, since the narrative's starting point is already the existential edge—the 1937 agony of possible non-survival that followed the denunciation of *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk* in *Pravda* as "Muddle instead of Music." Anna Akhmatova, the poet with whom, as the novel reminds us, Shostakovich once sat in mutually appreciative silence for 20 minutes, wrote in *Northern Elegies*: "I shall not lie in my own grave." Shostakovich had the same sense of self-distance.

The composer's early years are summed up by his painfully delirious love affair with Tanya, the "hard, demeaning work" of playing cinema piano, or the open-air performance of his *First Symphony* disrupted by a competitive concert from the neighbourhood dogs. Motifs repeat: a string of garlic threaded round a wrist to ward off infections; a small case packed against possible arrest; the cocktail sauce with bobbing shrimps in the plane Shostakovich gets to the United States, and where later the composer imagines himself afloat.

At one level, this phenomenology of daily life echoes the shadow-double of Barnes's novel, Osip Mandelstam's memoir *The Noise of Time*. But where the hideous sideboard owned by a relation of Mandelstam's, or the landscape of a Baltic beach, testify to the age they came from, the objects here are pared to their significance for Shostakovich. Two clocks, for instance, daily chime together in perfect unison. "This was not chance. He would turn on the wireless a

minute or two before the hour. Galya would be in the dining room, with the clock's door open, holding back the pendulum with one finger." In turn, the book is structured less round onward time than time repeated:

"Motifs repeat: a string of garlic threaded round a wrist to ward off infection; a small case packed against possible arrest"

particularly, the three leap-year moments, 1936, 1948, and 1960, when Shostakovich came closest to destruction and despair.

In Russia, despair is sometimes difficult to separate from black humour: as the joke goes, "If you're over 40 and you wake up, and nothing hurts, that means you've died.' Unlike some English chroniclers of Russian life. Barnes has an ear for this mood: "Music is not like Chinese eggs; it does not improve by being kept underground." When Shostakovich reflects on what he sees as the passivity of Americans, he notes that "even the cows standing motionless in the fields looked like advertisements for condensed milk." One of Shostakovich's wry comments even has a parallel life as an in-joke for people who know Barnes's previous work on Gustave Flaubert: "Life was the cat that dragged the parrot downstairs by the tail; his head banged against every step."

But it is above all the "hard, irreducible purity" of music that drives the narration,

expressed not just in key sounds ("four factory sirens in F sharp") or Shostakovich's visceral reaction to conducting that he hates—"Toscanini chopped up music like hash and smeared disgusting sauce over it"—but in the crafting of language itself. Shostakovich's ageing shows not just in disillusion, or the shift of motion from "skitter" to "limp," but in a transformation of tempi. First comes a nervous scherzo of love entanglements: "And so he and Nina met, and they became lovers, but he was still trying to win Tanya back from her husband, and then Tanya fell pregnant, and then he and Nina fixed a date for their wedding, but at the last minute he couldn't face it so failed to turn up and ran away and hid..." Later, there is the slowing that Shostakovich himself liked to mark morendo, with the violist Fyodor Druzhinin told to play the slow movement of the Fifteenth Quartet "so that flies drop dead in mid-air, and the audience start leaving the hall from sheer boredom."

At once self-deprecating and precise, the joke captures not just Shostakovich's capacity for evasion, but the nature of his own composition, its saturated emptiness. Fictional portrayals of music soften and sweeten the nature of the art (take Vikram Seth's An Equal Music or Kazuo Ishiguro's Nocturnes), reducing it to ethereal cliché; the result is not too far from novelettes such as Florence L Barclay's The Rosary or Naomi Royde-Smith's Mildensee. But The Noise of Time shares with Leo Tolstoy's The Kreutzer Sonata—another text which has at its centre the tyranny of music and its physiologically devastating potential—the capacity for evocation of music-making that is worthy of the real thing. And, just as Shostakovich himself survived his encounters with power to transform dog barks and factory sirens into some of the 20th century's most explosive exercises in created sound, so this novel is, fortunately, much larger than the depiction of the composer in the familiar role of a "technician of survival," a midnight meditator on life's futility and his own.

Catriona Kelly is a professor of Russian at Oxford University. Her latest book is "St Petersburg: Shadows of the Past" (Yale)



"Of course I attend the meetings but I'm more of a lurker"



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Citizenship tests

Do ethnic majorities now need special protection, asks David Goodhart

The Cultural Defence of Nations: A Liberal Theory of Majority Rights

by Liav Orgad (Oxford University Press, £50)

This is an important and timely book. It helps both to explain aspects of current European politics—such as the rise of populism and David Cameron's repeated appeals to British values—and also provides a rigorous guide to what majorities can and cannot do to preserve their culture and way of life.

Its author, Liav Orgad, an Israeli lawyer, circles his subject with more legalistic detail than most people will comfortably bear. But it is an intellectual ice-breaker and will, or should, open up new territory for others to explore.

The idea of majority rights seems like a contradiction in terms. Majorities, it has been assumed, do not need special legal protection because their culture is dominant and transmitted through everything from schools to national ceremonies. And majorities by definition carry the greatest weight in a democracy, including deciding (at least in theory) the terms on which others can join the society.

And yet it has always been one of the blind spots of multiculturalism and theories of minority rights that they have had so little to say about ethnic *majorities*. Eric Kaufmann is one of the few academics to write interestingly about multiculturalism's "asymmetry"—its stress on the importance of personal autonomy, cultural preservation and group identity for individuals from minorities but its failure to see that the same principles, and psychological needs, might apply to individuals from majorities, too.

This was noticed by the British National Party and others on the far right who cynically invoked multiculturalism to defend whites in areas of rapid ethnic change. Meanwhile Donald Trump's appeal in the United States is surely based in part on the demographic anxiety of lower-status whites—non-Hispanic whites are now just 60 per cent of the US population—the sort of people who, in David Frum's description, are irked to have to "press one for English" on automated phone systems.

"We got nothing but problems... We're dying. We're dying," declared Trump in a recent speech. He is right. A celebrated paper by Angus Deaton and Anne Case has established that middle-aged white Americans, especially those without a college degree, are actually dying prematurely in very high numbers, mainly from suicide, alcoholism and overdoses of prescription and illegal drugs, because they think there is no future for people like them.



ATE GILLON/GETTY IMAG

So are national majorities really now under such pressure that they need new legal and political assistance? Orgad is not completely comfortable with the idea, but ends up justifying support for a "thin" version of the majority culture, partly on the grounds of avoiding a nationalist backlash.

He describes four kinds of "needy" majorities who might be justified in claiming some kind of protection. First, and most relevant to contemporary Europe, are the majorities slowly disappearing in the light of low fertility and immigration. Second are regionalminority majorities such as the non-Russian majorities in the Baltic states and Ukraine, which face a permanent threat of Russian domination. Third are victimised majorities, such as the Jews in Israel, who as a result of past persecution and scattering feel entitled to only allow immigration from fellow Jews. And finally, "minoritised majorities" such as the Slovak majority in Slovakia, who behave towards the Hungarian minority with the state of mind of a minority because the Slovaks were once subordinate to the Hungarians in the Austro-Hungarian empire.

Focusing on disappearing majorities in western countries, Orgad also describes the diverging lifestyles and values of majorities and minorities—at least when the latter come from traditional cultures—on gender equality, free speech, sexual openness, religious piety and so on. Paradoxically, liberalism makes this divergence more, not less, likely: human rights law, multiculturalism, group rights and welfare states, when combined with the sheer scale of recent immigration, make it easier for minorities not to absorb majority norms and to live parallel lives

So if we accept that majorities do have some right to exist on grounds of personal autonomy and identity (in the same way that minorities do), then what can they require of minorities to ensure that continued existence? Rather disappointingly, Orgad's answer focuses very narrowly on immigration and naturalisation rules: citizenship and language tests, loyalty oaths, integration contracts and so on.

This is certainly one part of the story, and in Europe these admission criteria—commonplace for decades in the US, Canada and other immigration-based western countries—have emerged from nothing 15 years ago into a thicket of exams and tests.

He compares the tests as they apply to Europe, the US and Israel, and within Europe he considers France, Germany, the Netherlands and the UK. And he is sniffily censorious about almost anything that departs from liberal democratic generalities.

Orgad is right that some of the test questions are a bit crass. In the 2005 UK citizenship test, people had to "know" whether Father Christmas came from Iceland, Lap-

land or the North Pole.

And he is also right that such tests often imply a falsely static and singular view of being British or German or Dutch. But he seems to forget that these are just one-off entry tests and have a mainly symbolic value for both new and existing citizens. It does not matter where Father Christmas comes from. What *does* matter is that you have made the effort to read and remember the *Life in the UK* guide to passing the citizenship test, and thereby acknowledged that you are entering an already existing society with its own rules and idiosyncrasies.

Orgad reserves his greatest scorn for the Dutch test, which subjects applicants to pictures of nude women and homosexuals. Yet even this test, as he admits, accepts the principle that you do not have to be a liberal to become a member of a liberal society. You can remain privately disapproving of homo-

"The forces that make integrating minorities harder—liberalism, multiculturalism, identity politics—also fragment the majority"

sexuality, but you do have to accept the right of other Dutch people to display their homosexuality in public.

To look at it the other way round, a liberal state can prioritise the way of life of the majority, but must also accept other ways of life (within the law). That is fine so far as it goes but it leaves open the question of what is a majority? And how, beyond the design of one-off citizenship tests, can a majority way of life be prioritised in the hurly-burly of everyday life?

Orgad simply assumes there is such a thing as a coherent majority by which he seems to mean an ethno-cultural majority. But does it even make sense to talk of a dominant culture or a national way of life in modern Britain? The forces that make integrating minorities harder-liberalism, multiculturalism, identity politics and so on-also increasingly fragment the majority. Think of the gulf between a Ukip sympathising 65-yearold grandmother living in a small town in the north of England and a Guardian-reading gay web designer living in Hoxton. We have always been a country of many tribes but do we still recognise something in common behind our particularist colourings?

It seems that many of us do. We no longer think ethnically, except in the haziest of ways, and we would be horrified if David Cameron started talking about promoting white British values. Yet it is, of course, a *society* not an ethnicity that we want newcomers to respect and join, albeit a society shaped historically

by the ethnic majority.

And it is in that surrounding society where the majority way of life, in all its variety, can still be found—from the Queen at the top to neighbourhood shops at the bottom.

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Orgad does not seem to be interested in preserving a majority culture in everyday life. But this is surely the crux of the matter. There may be no right to remain the majority in your own neighbourhood (if you are from the ethnic majority) but there is some implicit political right to a settled cultural life, to some control over and stability in your surroundings. This is the social psychological basis of minority and majority identity rights.

And it means broadening the focus of a liberal theory of majority rights to include, among other things, protecting the role of the majority language, parliamentary sovereignty, history in schools, national rituals (it is no coincidence that Remembrance Day becomes more, not less, important every year) and encouraging an ethnic mix in schools and neighbourhoods that reflects the national demography and that all groups are broadly comfortable with.

Not all these things are easily subject to legislation, but there are other ways of promoting desirable things than through law. Well-designed "nudges" may be more effective than legislation in encouraging people to think of people from other religious or ethnic groups as potential friends.

Towards the end of the book, Orgad raises the interesting question of whether the quest for majority rights is a "swan song" for an old idea of national identity. Perhaps as people become more educated and mobile, they will draw their identities less from place and group and more from inside themselves, making them less concerned with maintaining stable communities. I doubt it.

But if ethnic majorities are destined to become minorities throughout the west, we are left with another question: is it possible to retain a strong sense of public interest and mutual regard in a society that is not grounded in an ethnic majority? Over the next 50 years we will find out.

David Goodhart is Prospect's Editor-at-Large. He is Director of the Integration Hub (www. integrationhub.net)



Children of the revolution

David Aaronovitch is too for giving of the joyless radical left, says $\ensuremath{\textit{Philip\,Hensher}}$

Party Animals: My Family and other Communists

by David Aaronovitch (Jonathan Cape, £17.99)

The collapse of communism in 1989 is the most significant event of our lifetimes but one which will continue to be surrounded by myth-making and reinvention for years to come. The political thinking that led up to it was despatched to the realms of historical curiosity and of lost causes, until the election of Jeremy Corbyn as leader of the Labour Party in 2015. When the primary question posed by any audience was "What on earth were they thinking of?", it sometimes seems as if credulity might be suspended across the board.

David Aaronovitch, these days, is a blamelessly liberal and sceptical columnist for *The Times*. His interesting though problematic childhood memoir *Party Animals* focuses on a marginal but important episode. If the moral issues remain fudged, no-one could blame Aaronovitch for evading a final plausible judgement.

The subject of his book is his parents, and the world of extremist left-wing politics to which they devoted their lives. At some point, we all come to understand that our parents were wrong about a lot of things. That is what growing up consists of. It is not often that history conspires to confirm the revisions of the children: indeed, in this case, to leave the children muttering that their parents weren't as bad as all that.

Somewhere in Nostromo, Conrad observes that an old freedom fighter was "full of scorn for the populace, as your austere republican so often is." It's interesting to read Aaronovitch's tale of life among the elite, or what would have been the elite if history had gone their way. His parents, Sam and Lavender, were important figures in the world of postwar British communist politics. Sam was sketched, devastatingly, by Doris Lessing in both a novel and, much later, a memoir. He was the Cultural Secretary of the British Communist Party, and Lessing reasonably asks: "Why had the party chosen a young man who had read nothing of modern literature, and was not interested in the arts, to represent culture?" Aaronovitch spends a good deal of energy rebutting this and other witnesses to his father's charmlessness, without coming near refuting them.

His parents' world was well meaning, serious and committed without always having something of interest to say. When Sam wrote a book with his second wife called *Crisis in Kenya*, "a condemnation of the economic consequences of settler rule in a British colony," his son feels duty bound to add that he "had no background in economics and that, of course, he had never been abroad, let alone to Africa."

For Aaronovitch's parents, there was no need to go to Africa—in fact, there seems to have been little reason for them to engage on any personal level with the proletariat. Aaronovitch dwells lovingly on the names of the faithful (many, but not all, north London and Jewish) just as the French aristocrat Saint-Simon recited the names of the dukes in court precedence: "The Davises, the Schons, the Kessels, the Frankels, the Whi-

"I struggled to find a single person in this book who was, and remained, a member of the urban proletariat"

takers, the Boatmans (or the Boatmen as my mother inevitably called them), the Formans (but not the Formen), the Loefflers, Pete and Elvira Richards, old Irma Petrov and the impoverished Ken Herbert, with his glasses sellotaped together, the lenses thick with dust. And sprinkled among them the senior Party people, the Gollans, Jock and Bridget Nicholson and the Aaronovitches."

I struggled to find a single person in this book who was, and remained, a member of the urban proletariat. It was like trying to find a spot welder in a life of Debo the Duchess of Devonshire, or for that matter Kim Philby. Say what you like about Tories, but at least they know the people they are trying to help.

The story of this family is largely one of convenient privilege. They weren't rich, but they had access to money. It takes the breath away when Lavender's Uncle Bob buys her a house in Highgate. His parents' wooing is carried out in a carefully unacceptable atmosphere-Lavender's father describes Sam as "that hairy Jewish gorilla." From that point onwards, the world is innocent and charming, mildly snobbish-"That horrid little man" was Lavender's style of reprobation, and in approval, "Sabrina looked lovely with the Young Communist League banner." Amusingly, Lavender, a minatory presence in the nursery, sees nothing in particular wrong with her son's favourite book, that energetic



defence of the excesses of Belgian imperialism, *Babar the Elephant*.

It's curious, too, that when the young Aaronovitch goes to Manchester University and discovers feminism and anti-racist politics (but not gay rights-that was still beyond the pale for the comrades) it doesn't seem to have plucked any of them from the deserving crowd. Aaronovitch writes of Manchester feminism that, "the oestrogen was intoxicating. It may have been uncomfortable for young men, but there was something about feminism that I thought was magnificent. It was obviously a movement for 'liberation." All of which is true, but I wish that he had been able to fill his pages with a few more women than the occasional "Comrade J," a woman he lives with in a Manchester commune, whose personal odyssey of generous



David Aaronovitch marches with anti-cuts demonstrators, as a journalist, in 2011

sexual liberation was greatly appreciated by Aaronovitch.

When it comes to the anti-racist movement, the targets of interest remain and—one must conclude—were regarded at the time by the movement, as "young banner-less black people," "two large West Indians," "black boys" [sic] fighting with the police and the "mostly Asian workers" who went on strike at "a photo-processing plant called Grunwick's."

Aaronovitch explores the 1960s principle that "the personal is the political," but only as far as denouncing his father's affairs, his mother's general ghastliness. Their worst crime here apparently was to have sent the young Aaronovitch to a comprehensive rather than a grammar school, or to have not sought a scholarship to Westminster

or somewhere similar. (He got into Oxford before being sent down for not bothering to learn French or German, so it can't have been all that bad). It might have been more telling to have wondered how his parents would have conducted themselves towards the rest of the world, if they had been given the opportunity.

If this book had been published a year ago, it would have been read as an interesting episode in a long-closed history. These days, the new Lavenders and Sams are hard at work making implausible claims on behalf of the Labour Party. It was all very amusing when it was limited to a few aristocratic-Marxist families in North London, happily accepting donations of houses from their rich relations. In the real world, their solution may not be a solid one.

Aaronovitch has the honesty to point out

that Sam cast a party worker into oblivion when he discovered that he was gay: let us be grateful that such people only rarely had a shooting squad at their disposal in this country. The glimpses of the family from an outside perspective are piquant, telling, and not at all complimentary. A neighbour in Highgate, years afterwards, tells Aaronovitch that he and his family had a birthday and Christmas ritual in which a box of matches or a penny pencil would be wrapped up and given over to the poor victim as "Lavender's present." "It says something about this man that he obviously thought I would enjoy this anecdote"—yes, but not as much as it tells us about Lavender and her joyless kind.

Philip Hensher is a novelist, critic and professor of creative writing. His latest novel is "The Emperor Waltz" (Fourth Estate)

The wonder of Terrence Malick

His extraordinary films show the beauty and violence at the heart of nature, says Sameer Rahim

Terrence Malick: Rehearsing the Unexpected Edited by Carlo Hintermann and Daniele Villa (Faber and Faber, £25)

Terrence Malick is a man of mysteries. Over the last 40 years, the American director has released just six films, with a 20-year pause between the second and third. Unlike most directors, he shows no interest in being a gun for hire and only makes films he has written. He frustrates his studio bosses by spending years in the editing suite getting each scene exactly right. He never does publicity, forbids his image being used in promotional material and almost never gives interviews.

Yet the real mystery about Malick is the work. Shot through with natural imagery, philosophical voiceovers and unconventional plotting, his films sometimes baffle the viewer. Some critics regard him as overblown, humourless and overly religious. Just like great poetry, though, Malick's films communicate before they are fully understood. And the mystery has a purpose: his subject is both divine mystery and the mystery we are to one another.

Fittingly, even Malick's birthplace is uncertain. The editors of *Terrence Malick: Rehearsing the Unexpected*—a collection of interviews with the director's collaborators including actors, producers, cinematographers and composers—plump for Ottawa, Illinois but other sources say Waco, Texas, where he grew up. Malick has an unusually intellectual background for Hollywood. After Harvard, he studied philosophy at Oxford with Gilbert Ryle and in 1969 translated Martin Heidegger's *The Essence of Rea-*

sons. He wrote journalism for the New Yorker before training at the American Film Institute in Los Angeles, where fellow director David Lynch later studied.

Malick shares with Lynch an interest in small-town America and surreal visuals. But while Lynch sees festering corruption under the smooth suburban lawn, Malick finds both wonder and violence in the natural world, and humanity even in killers. The American artist with whom he has the closest

"When asked by one actor why they didn't rehearse more, Malick replied: 'Your whole life has prepared you for this moment'"

affinity is the novelist Marilynne Robinson, by coincidence also born in November 1943. Like Robinson, Malick fell into a long silence after early success, and like her he takes an unfashionable interest in theology. His films are the closest the medium gets to the interiority of great novels.

One novelistic technique that has become his cinematic signature is voiceover. Voiceover is used by many directors to rescue films they are unable to make coherent with the material they have shot. But Malick uses voiceover to add layers of complexity. He allows characters to articulate their inner thoughts or comment on their own actions in retrospect. It can provide the key to unlocking the whole work.

The opening shot of The Thin Red Line (1998)—the war movie adapted from James Jones's novel that began Malick's triumphant return to cinema—shows a crocodile slipping sinisterly into a river. We hear a soldier's voice: "What's this war in the heart of nature? Why does nature vie with itself? The land contend with the sea? Is there an avenging power in nature? Not one power, but two?" Over the course of three gripping hours, Malick exposes not only the horrors of war but the violence at the heart of nature-and humanity. The year is 1942 and the United States army is attempting to capture the Pacific island of Guadalcanal from the Japanese. The soldiers see their comrades killed and do their fair share of killing. During their drunken victory celebrations, they bind the mouth of the once-sinister crocodile and begin poking him. As so often in Malick's work, cruelty to animals is the mark of the beast in man.

The contending sides in man's nature are embodied in two characters: Sergeant Welsh (Sean Penn) and Private Witt (Jim Caviezel). Welsh interrogates Witt for absconding before the battle. Witt left his post to swim with the Guadalcanal natives, whose hopeful singing resounds through the film. (Malick tends to see native cultures as embodiments of optimistic wisdom. In The New World (2005), his flawed take on the Pocahontas story, the Indians are more innocent than their European conquerors.) Witt tells Welsh that he has "seen another world" beyond suffering, one where compassion is still possible. But Welsh doesn't buy it. War has made him cynical. In battle, he says, all a man can do



The European dream was meant to unite us. It would transcend nationhood and bring peace, prosperity, freedom and democracy. It has failed. This incisive, clear-sighted and pugnacious essay by MEP Daniel Hannan shows why.



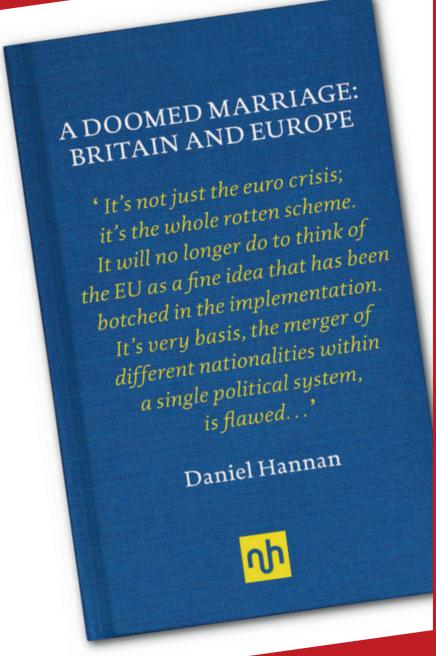
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In The Tree of Life, Jessica Chastain plays a gentle woman who follows the "way of grace"

is "shut his eyes and let nothing touch him. Look out for himself."

Their debate resonates in two of the film's most extraordinary sequences. In the first, the soldiers troop onwards in the tense jungle on the lookout for a Japanese attack. Emerging from the distance, an elderly native man walks past in the other direction, minding his own business. The soldier at the front turns briefly towards him and for a moment heand the audience-glimpse Guadalcanal from a totally different perspective. Perhaps Witt was right and another world exists right in front of our eyes. The second sequence takes place in the heat of battle as the US soldiers storm the Japanese camp. The camera follows Welsh and his comrades shooting and bayoneting screaming Japanese. In the corner of the screen there appears, very briefly, a Japanese soldier sitting calm and cross-legged with his eyes closed, impervious to the chaos. It is a miraculous moment-and a mysterious one. Is he, as Welsh advised, cutting himself off from the world and letting nothing touch him? Or is he the Japanese equivalent of Witt, trusting in God when all else is being destroyed around him?

The interviewees in *Rehearsing the Unexpected* reveal how Malick elicits such moments. For *The Thin Red Line*, he shot enough footage to make a 10-part series and then discovered the best stories while editing. Amazingly for such a complicated shoot in difficult locations, he filmed chronologically to make it easier for his actors to inhabit their characters' journey. He casts

actors according to their temperament as much as their ability. In Jim Caviezel, he saw "a kind of humility" that suited Witt; it also helped that during his audition, Caviezel gifted a rosary to Malick's wife. The non-religious Sean Penn, on the other hand, brought a tough humanism to Welsh's character. When asked by one actor why they didn't rehearse more, Malick replied: "Your whole life has prepared you for this moment."

For those less susceptible to the experimental transcendence of the late work, the early films remain his best. Yet the same

"Malick is a master at finding universal themes in everyday interactions"

theme of the darkness at the heart of man recurs, though it is traced with a cooler eve. In his first film, Badlands (1973), a young man called Kit (Martin Sheen) goes on a killing spree in 1950s South Dakota with his teenage girlfriend Holly (Sissy Spacek). Unlike in the more schlocky films on the same subject—Oliver Stone's Natural Born Killers (1994) comes to mind-Malick does not view his protagonists as mad, or even especially bad. Kit's murders are motivated by a banal desire for adventure and glamour. (He compares himself to James Dean.) As Holly's voiceover reveals, she went along for the ride without thinking much about the consequences. The most affecting scene is one of those mysterious moments with which

Malick's later work is filled. While on the run in the middle of the night, the couple stop on a lonely highway and dance to Nat King Cole illuminated by the car headlights. They could almost be dancing at the prom—endearingly innocent and chillingly callous.

Malick films the American landscape with lavish attention in Badlands. He has an intimate feel for natural imagery. His cast and crew often become frustrated as he diverts the camera from the scene ostensibly being filmed to capture a flock of rare birds or a passing butterfly. While making Days of Heaven (1978), a love triangle set on a farm in Texas in 1916, he made considerable use of the "magic hour"—the time between the sun setting and darkness falling, which suffuses the screen with a dreamy glow. That glow is ignited for the denouement, when the wealthy farmer played by Sam Shepherd realises that his wife has married him for money. A Biblical plague of locusts invades the sky and attacks the crops. The farmer starts a fire that rages out of control-just like his anger at his wife, leading to inevitable tragedy.

The Biblical symbols present in the early work become more explicit in Malick's most recent two films. The astounding *Tree of Life* (2011)—the title is a reference to the Garden of Eden—begins with a quotation from the Book of Job. God is chastising Job after sending upon him a host of ills: "Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth... when the morning stars sang together?" Human suffering



Brad Pitt in The Tree of Life plays a strict father who follows the "way of nature"

and cruelty are once again Malick's grand themes, but unlike his previous films, *The Tree of Life* is highly autobiographical. We are in Waco, Texas in the 1950s, following a middle-class family with three brothers—one of whom, we learn at the start, will die as a young man. Malick also grew up in Waco in the 1950s with two younger brothers—one of whom committed suicide while studying the guitar in Spain.

In a rare interview from 1975, Malick said: "I was raised in a violent environment in Texas. What struck me was how violence erupted and ended before you really had time to understand what was happening." In the film, the brother's death is foreshadowed in the aggression shown by the father (Brad Pitt) towards his sons. He is especially harsh on the eldest boy, Jack. He terrifies him with his rages at the dinner table; he shouts at him for saying "daddy" instead of "sir"; and punishes him for banging the front door by making him open and close it quietly 50 times. Jack prefers his mother (Jessica Chastain), a gentle woman who, like Private Witt, follows what she calls the "way of grace," while her husband, like Sergeant Welsh, follows the "way of nature."

Malick contrasts the couple by assigning them different pieces of music. The mother dances in the sunlight to Bedrich Smetana's joyfully invigorating *Moldau*. Her husband enjoys the sombre grandeur of Johannes Brahms's *Fourth Symphony*, to which he compels Jack and the boys to listen, telling them in awe that Arturo Toscanini recorded

the piece 65 times before he was satisfied. (Malick was perhaps thinking here of his own tyrannical perfectionism.) The middle brother sits on the veranda playing the guitar, a musical middle-ground between his mother and father—and a tribute to Malick's own guitarist brother.

As Jack gets older, he discovers violence. He tortures birds and frogs and shoots his brother with an air gun. He hates his father so much he prays for him to die. One day, he finds him working under the family car. The camera follows his eye to the jack elevating the vehicle and he imagines pulling it away.

His dark thoughts are paralleled in the extraordinary mystical prologue to the film that shows the beginning of life on earth. A dinosaur approaches an injured dinosaur lying by a riverbed and considers crushing its head—but, like Jack, in the end decides not to. Malick is a master at finding universal themes in everyday interactions—nowhere more so than in *The Tree of Life*, where each scene is both a richly observed social situation and a metaphor of good and evil, suffering and compassion.

Malick's most recent film *To the Wonder* (2012) tries to pull the same trick but is less successful; it's all metaphor and hardly any story. The lovers played by Ben Affleck and Olga Kurylenko barely speak a word to each other over the two hours. Their falling in love is supposed to represent man's relationship with God—the Biblical para-text here is *Song of Solomon*—but the film never quite catches

fire. The subplot about a priest (Javier Bardem) losing his faith feels obvious.

And yet Malick's skilful overlapping of images and music creates magical scenes. When the lovers visit the spectacular Mont Saint-Michel abbey in Normandy-known as "the Wonder"—they caress each other to the sound of the prelude from Richard Wagner's Parsifal. The musical theme is ominous: the opera is about the rejection of romantic love in favour of the divine. In the end, the relationship does fail and the last shot of the film is Kurylenko's character back at Mont Saint-Michel, now alone. But when the same *Parsifal* music plays it no longer seems threatening; rather it washes the character and the audience with compassion. Having given each other great pleasure and great pain during their relationship, only after breaking up do they discover a greater love in forgiving each other. It is a quintessential Malick moment.

Sameer Rahim is Prospect's Arts and Books Editor



"Rachel, I need a sense of closure"

Books in brief

In Wartime: Stories from Ukraine

by Tim Judah (Allen Lane, £20)



Tim Judah has written a timely account of life in Ukraine since Russia annexed Crimea in March 2014, as the future of the Donbass, Ukraine's eastern region, remains uncertain. *In Wartime* aims to fill the gap

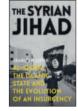
between hurriedly written news reports and dry academic studies. Judah, a distinguished journalist, not only travels to the war-torn east, but also to lesser-known corners of the Ukraine's west and south (the chapters on Bessarabia, the "appendix" of land extending west from Odessa, tucked beneath Moldova, are particularly intriguing). His long cast list of characters includes a frontline tattooist and an 87-year-old bomb shelter poet.

Judah's reporting is underpinned by history, with the Second World War and its divisive legacy in Ukraine resurfacing again and again. In Russia's offensive against Ukraine, "rewriting history is as important as writing the news." For Ukraine, matters are complicated by the fact that it has "no common soundtrack of history." Judah's book is peppered with lessons from the Balkans, which he reported from during the wars of 1990s and continues to cover for the *Economist*.

The result is a vivid, human portrait of a society drained not just by war but by years of corruption. Ukraine, Judah points out, is not just fighting Russian-backed rebels, but engaged in a "race against time to save what could be saved." "We have no choice but to succeed," Natalie Jaresko, Ukraine's Chicago-born minister of finance, tells him as they sip wine on her terrace outside Kiev. Judah shows that, even as Ukraine fades from western newspapers, the wounds of the past two years will take decades to heal. Annabelle Chapman

The Syrian Jihad: Al-Qaeda, ISIS and the Evolution of an Insurgency

by Charles R Lister (Hurst, £15.99)



In early 2011, Syrians took to the streets demanding greater political freedoms and civil rights—only to receive in return state-sponsored repression and violence. The population grew angry, then armed and then,

in some instances, turned jihadi.

Five years on, the Syrian civil war is a

mesh of sectarian divisions and hatreds. Charles Lister, a former fellow at the Brookings Doha Institute, has one goal in mind. He wants to tell the story of the emergence and evolution of the struggle of Sunni jihadists and their Syrian Salafist allies against President Bashar al-Assad, and he tells it with exceptional erudition and lucidity.

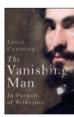
He is well placed to do so. He has spent years engaging with hundreds of Syrian insurgents ranging from those fighting on the front lines to senior commanders and political figures, from teenagers to middleaged men, from the secular to the devout. This wide-ranging access gives the book a vitality that combines with the author's comprehensive analysis of Syria, its political structures and its history to give the most detailed account yet written of how Sunni jihadists have come to dominate an (admittedly loose) anti-regime movement that still largely wants in 2016 what it wanted in 2011.

By examining where Syria's jihadists came from, what helped to make them the force they are today and, critically, how the latest bombing campaigns by Russian and the United States might affect their future role in Syria, Lister has produced a work that is required reading for both experts and the general reader alike.

David Patrikarakos

The Vanishing Man: In Pursuit of Velázquez

by Laura Cummings (Random House, £18.99)



In 1991, in Madrid, where she had fled to grieve the sudden death of her father, Laura Cumming stumbled upon *Las Meninas*, the Spanish painter Diego Velázquez's renowned masterpiece in the Prado. The encounter, as she

describes it, was an epiphany. Years later, by now the *Observer*'s art critic, she came upon a pamphlet written by a provincial Victorian tradesman, ominously named John Snare, who had been similarly enraptured by a now lost portrait by the artist of the English Prince Charles, which he had chanced to buy in 1845. But where for Cumming Velázquez's revolutionary art, which places his 17th-century subjects vividly in our presence, had offered a kind of salvation, Snare's passion became his doom.

Cumming's ostensible subject is Velázquez: she summons him from the little we know, hurrying through the corridors of the Alcazar, an ambitious courtier as well as revered painter, presented to us for eternity in his self-portrait amid the royal household. But she also examines the artist who moves us. Cumming approaches her hero through that other vanishing man, Snare, who endured ridicule, harassment, bankruptcy, shame and ultimately exile, in his efforts to prove his painting's attribution to the Spanish master. What is it, the book asks, that makes a Velázquez?

This book is a magnificent piece of historical research, the piecing together of Snare's life story, while bringing alive both the Habsburg court and Victorian England's murky art world. But it is also an eloquent defence of pure connoisseurship against dry contextual academicism—and a blazing display of passionate looking.

The Lost Boys: Inside Football's Slave Trade

by Ed Hawkins (Bloomsbury, £18.99)



For more than a decade, Fifa, football's governing body, has been embroiled in a scandal that has damaged the sport and seen Sepp Blatter, its President, and Michel Platini, the head of European football, sus-

pended from footballing activity for eight years. Now Fifa has a new challenge and it comes in the form of underage boys, mainly from Africa and with dreams of playing for Europe's top clubs, being smuggled into southern Europe by "unscrupulous agents and grasping scouts."

Told that he was going to be the next African football star, "Jay-Jay" was trafficked from Guinea at the age of 17. His family disowned him after he was sexually abused by an "agent." In London, his misery continued until he was left on the streets.

But *The Lost Boys: Inside Football's Slave Trade* is not just a harrowing tale of exploitation for financial gains. Ed Hawkins, an investigative journalist, also exposes the corruption of officials that he alleges are willing to forge documents and shows that the rules regarding the international trade of players are rarely enforced. That said, perhaps the biggest surprise is Hawkins's realisation that in some cases the boys were not interested in returning home when their dreams collapsed—they were enjoying Europe and the freedoms and luxuries that accompany it.

Though that may be the case for some, it does not apply to all. The greed and desire of fake agents and scouts to get a share of the international trade of players (£155m in 2014) is not going to slow down. It is just one more problem for Blatter's successor to tackle when he is elected in February. Fifa can no longer brush its problems under the carpet and evade questions on difficult topics. But whether it is willing to accept some level of responsibility and act is another matter.

Chris Tilbury

The Prose Factory: Literary Life in Britain since 1918

by DJ Taylor (Vintage, £20)



The startling proliferation of creative writing courses in the early 21st century suggests that the idea of a literary career has lost none of its romantic appeal, but DJ Taylor's compendious account of English literary

life in the past 100 years offers an antidote to the notion that writing is a glamorous or profitable trade.

From the muscular Georgian poet and editor, JC Squire ("effectively destitute") to the post-war novelist Julian McLaren-Ross, the model for X Trapnel in Anthony Powell's Dance to the Music of Time ("on his uppers") and the former Angry Young Man, John Braine ("Ate his final Christmas dinner in a community centre, surrounded by downand-outs"), Taylor chronicles the lows (and rarer highs) of literary life since the First World War.

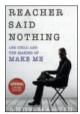
The starting points of his study are the voluminous questions, "What is 'literary culture'? And what is 'taste'?" Examining these intractable issues from every imaginable perspective—academic, critical, journalistic, authorial and commercial (the passages on how writers earn a living make grimly fascinating reading)—Taylor conjures pungent portraits of the century's major (and minor) literary figures.

"Indefatigable" "cheery" and recurrent adjectives, and his book is both, enlivened by a bracing strain of literary bitchery. The tone is predominantly masculine (the chapter titled-after the 1979 Dire Straits song-Lady Writers is unlikely to win Taylor many female admirers) and, as he approaches the contemporary literary scene, cautious to the point of evasiveness. The contemporary writer, he concludes, is beset by all the "Enemies of Promise" defined by Cyril Connolly in his 1938 literary autobiography. It is an observation both melancholy and strangely reassuring.

Jane Shilling

Reacher Said Nothing: Lee Child and the Making of Make Me

by Andy Martin (Transworld, £18.99)



How to begin? That's the kind of question you find yourself asking after being engrossed in 302 pages on the painstaking process of writing a bestseller.

This book starts with an email. Cambridge aca-

demic Andy Martin writes to Lee Child and asks if he can watch him write the 20th Jack Reacher thriller, *Make Me*, and thus provide an insight into a series of novels that have turned Reacher into a worldwide phenomenon. While *Reacher Said Nothing* doesn't quite match their narrative suspense, its combination of literary criticism, fandom and simple observation make it gripping.

Child begins each new book on 1st September, the date he began the first one—a ritual he has to fulfil. He starts with nothing, and allows the emerging plot to surprise him, subsisting on a diet of cigarettes and sugar. Martin buzzes around him, like an annoying child, sitting at his shoulder as he types with two fingers. His analysis (there's a lot of talk about Roland Barthes and the Flaubertian point of view) can be irritating, but his questions prompt real insights into the nitty-gritty act of writing.

Child, a compelling mixture of arrogance and charm, claims to have no rules except "You should write the fast stuff slow and the slow stuff fast." As you watch him grapple with the business of letting the story build with just the right rhythm, thinking hard about every word, it's hard not to feel real admiration. Fascinating.

Sarah Crompton

The Love of Strangers: What Six Muslim Students Learned in Jane Austen's London

by Nile Green (Princeton, £24.95)



Last year's nuclear deal raised hopes of renewed cultural exchange between Iran and the west. As a historical model, we could do worse than look at what happened after the Anglo-Iranian Treaty of 1812. Nile

Green's well-researched book tells the story of six Iranian students who arrived in England in 1815 to learn about the new technologies they lacked at home. One student, Mirza Salih, kept a diary over his four-year stay, noting the morals and manners of the Englishmen (and women) he met. Never translated into English, Mirza's diaries offer a fascinating perspective on scenes familiar from Jane Austen's novels. Initially puzzled by the free mixing of the sexes, the students

soon threw themselves into social life, flirting and dancing with society ladies.

The Persian prince who paid for their trip wanted to know how to modernise Iran. After learning English, the Iranians travelled round the country—including Oxford and Cambridge—studying mathematics, engineering and medicine. They learned about Christian sects, finding an affinity between Islam and Unitarianism. Inevitably they got into scrapes: Mirza was told off for dyeing his beard in a Turkish bath, and evangelicals tried to convert them. But a more common reaction was hospitable friendliness.

Some modern Iranian intellectuals, their views coloured by later English dominance, read these diaries as the start of the Iranian elites' fatal intoxication with the west. But Mirza viewed his hosts with an anthropological eye, noting cultural differences but rarely judging them. Fittingly, he later returned to England as a diplomat.

Sameer Rahim

Shylock is My Name

by Howard Jacobson (Hogarth, £16.99)



After his previous novel, *J*, about anti-semitic massacres in a near-future Britain, Howard Jacobson returns to his usual comic mode by rewriting *The Merchant of Venice* as part of a series in which authors from

Jeanette Winterson to Jo Nesbø base new novels on Shakespeare plays.

Jacobson transplants 16th-century Venice to a flashy Manchester suburb with a cast including an airhead footballer and a spoiled reality star ripe for the sort of grumpy-old-man satire on show in his 2012 novel *Zoo Time*. The persecuted and vengeful moneylender Shylock finds his modern analogue in Strulovitch, an art collector in crisis after his daughter falls for a Christian who refuses to be circumcised. Shylock himself turns up to offer Strulovitch advice and explain matters from the original play, such as whether he intended to take a pound of flesh from Antonio's heart or from his penis.

The action can be long-winded and you get a flavour of the humour on offer from Jacobson's decision to call his brattish Portia "Anna Livia Plurabelle Cleopatra A Thing Of Beauty Is A Joy Forever Christine." The book most sustains attention as an unusually engaged form of literary criticism. Jacobson treats Shylock less as a product of Shakespeare's culture and imagination than as a real historical figure emblematic of Jewish experience—an approach that gives the novel peculiar vigour in spite of its flaws.

Anthony Cummins

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Life



Sam Leith

Obsessed with the forbidden

"Dad, can I have a trickortreat today?" These are, more or less unfailingly, the first words out of my four-year-old son's mouth at half six in the morning. A "trickortreat," in his happy rhyming slang, is a sweet, so named because of the indelible impression that Halloween made on him. On that night, my children went through the backstreets of East Finchley like a swarm of confectionerycrazed locusts. We have buckets of sweets; literally, buckets. Two of them: one purple, one orange.

"Rrghghhgbrorryshup," is my reply.

"Dad, can I? Can I maybe?"

"Maybe. Ok. Maybe. NaSHUP."

"[zzzz]"

"[zzzz]"

"Dad?"

"[zzzz]"

"DAD?"

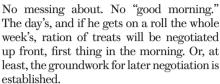
"WHA"

© MAMA MIA/SHUTTERSTOCK

"Dad, when can I watch Pork Patrol?"

"It's called Paw Patrol, and I don't know, okay? Please stop asking me."

And on it goes. He's relentless.



"No," is regarded as an opening gambit, to be converted at once into "I'll think about it," or "I'm not making any promises," or "maybe" in the interests of two or three more minutes of parental peace. And come 4pm, the mental ledger will be extracted and that "maybe" will be weaponised.

How on earth is one supposed to deal with this stuff? Being uptight middle-class parents, we are in general opposed to the idea of our children binge-eating confectionery; likewise its televisual equivalent. Sweets, we intone piously, are a treat, to be consumed singly and only after meals on weekends; just as screen time is a privilege.

And yet—by that peculiar logic whereby anything forbidden becomes infinitely more desirable—the kids are obsessed with sweets and television. Which means, in turn, that they become ever more central to daily life. Since both physical violence and locking children in basements is frowned on, and Kantian moral logic doesn't work on four-year-olds, my main if not only disciplinary resource is a vague threat.

"Brush your teeth and you can have a toffee. No, not after brushing your teeth. One day," or: "Stop punching each other or all of your sweets will be thrown in the bin. I'm serious. I won't pick them out and wash the cof-

fee grounds off them like last time." You can imagine how well this works. And the

escalatory logic of it means that the backstop threat, in other words the cancellation of Christmas, is routinely trotted out in order to persuade my daughter to let us brush her hair in the morning. Once she calls my bluff on that, we're sunk; might as well call social services and be done with it.

It is my dearest wish to raise a tribe of little Calvinists: children who regard a pleasure deferred as a pleasure redoubled, and a pleasure denied as a pleasure absolute. I restrict treats for just such a reason. And, thanks to what Freudians call "the return of the repressed," I have achieved completely the opposite effect.

> In theory, therefore, what I should do is sit the children down first thing every morning with their own weight in Haribo and a Peppa Pig omnibus-that, surfeiting, the

appetite may sicken and so die. But I can't bring myself to do that. I have a hunch that the appetite may be more robust than advertised.

So it's "Dad, Dad, Dad" and "Trickortreat, trickortreat, trickortreat." All day long. It's exhausting. By the time the kids are in bed, all we have the energy for is settling down to binge-watch rubbish on Netflix; my wife with the orange bucket on her lap, and me with the purple.

Sam Leith is an Associate Editor of Prospect

Life of the mind



Anna Blundy

Relationships that last a lifetime

I've known Sally since I was about 10. When I first met her she used to run marathons in yellow satin shorts. Perhaps they weren't satin but they looked like satin, bright against her tanned legs. We ate lobster together in Cape Cod and went on a speed boat, also yellow. She looked young enough to be my sister, but she wasn't.

The years rolled by and disasters struck us both. When I was in my late teens she went into psychoanalysis with a woman I shall call Deborah. She talked sincerely about her daily sessions with Deborah and I felt dismissive (my excuse-my age). "Each to his own," I thought. "But how Woody Allen, how American. Lucky for me that I can just... smoke these cigarettes, drink these bottles of vodka, sleep with these guys and... lie awake in terror every night to deal with my problems." And yet I listened, and what she said stuck in my head.

When finally I lay myself down on the psychoanalytic couch as Sally had always suggested, I thought about her. When I gave my analyst an inscribed book (I'd written it, he featured in it), I remembered the matching coffee mugs she'd once bought Deborah as a present and how Deborah had reacted. (I once went to a seminar on how to deal with a present-giving patient-interpret it, of course.)

It had been, what? Maybe 20 years since we had spoken. Far too many. We were on Skype. My teenage children, Sally's teenage children (I had mine relatively early, she relatively late), work, money, dogs-hers white and fluffy, mine big and black. Relationships. For, perhaps now is the time to confess that the biggest relationship, the most spectacular and the most damaging, in both our lives was with the same man-my father. Sally and I are both single.

We could say, and sometimes have said, shocking things to each other, but last week she surprised me. "I was talking to Deborah about you yesterday," she said.

"Deborah?! What do you mean?"

"I still have sessions. Once a week now."

"Not seriously."

"Sure," she said, laughing. "I've been seeing her for more than 30 years."

Something about this made me want to cry. And I couldn't believe Deborah was still alive. In the late 1980s, I had pictured a little old lady with white hair and glasses, a German accent. A female Sigmund Freud. In fact, it turns out, Deborah was the same age as her patient, she had perhaps just finished training when they started work together. But why was I so staggered? I mean, I've been seeing my analyst on and off for 20 years now. Ten more would seem easily possible if it weren't for his malicious retirement plans.

So, when a patient asks me, as one did this morning, how long this cure is likely to take there is no answer. I could say: "You'll feel much better in a year." This is true. "We could get a lot done in, say, two or three years." I think this is the answer my analyst gave in 1994. Also true. It's not open-ended so that therapists can cash in and therapy isn't addictive. In training, quite a lot of emphasis is put on "the end" and managing endings (especially as the NHS tends to offer a year with the possibility of a three-month extension but no more).

But, if the important factor in therapy or analysis is the relationship between analyst and analysand (and it is), the establishment of trust and the thinking together then... well, like any deep and important relationship, it could last a lifetime. It often does.

Anna Blundy is a writer training to be a psychotherapist. The situations described are composite.



Wendell Steavenson

February: month of the potato

It happens sometimes, but not very often, that I am tired of cooking. The last time was a year ago, I think. Perhaps it was the grey Parisian skies, a dull and heavy workload, a form of seasonal affective disorder. Two

days in a row, I walked past the fishmonger on the Rue Lepic and was strangely untempted by live spider crabs, glistening mackerel or fresh eel; even the razor clams left me cold. I stood in the vegetable shop and my eyes glazed with brassicas. Total lack of imagination.

And so I reverted to the basics: potatoes, parsley and a lime for the gin and tonic. It is apparently possible in France to be tired of red wine, too.

Ted Hughes wrote that November was the month of the drowned dog. February is the month of the potato. Familiar, warming, comfortable and comforting.

Take my two potatoes. I could: bake them, mash them, fry them. Parboil them and rough up their edges and coat them in leftover bacon fat and roast them crispy. Slice into wedges, slurp with olive oil and bung 'em in the oven, cube and sauté into crunchy dice, pour over cream and bake a gratin, boil them plain, squash the leftovers into bubble and squeak, grate them into latkes. Eat them hot or cold, peeled naked or left in red skins. It is not even necessary to pick just one style: my Irish sister-in-law cooks potatoes three ways when there's a big occasion.

In northern Europe potatoes are our childhood, our heritage and our quotidian. They are in our DNA. We use them every weight of potato in butter. They were extraordinary; silky smooth; did you ever think mash could be so elegant?

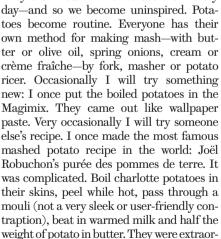
This is the paradox of the potato: I cook with one just about every day, yet it is the ingredient I know the least about. We take it for granted, but is there any other vegetable that requires such technical understanding? There are a bewildering array of varieties, sometimes categorised by name-Desiree, Maris Piper, King Edward-sometimes by their

relative proclivity for boiling, mashing or frying. The differences come from varying proportions of starch and water. Heston Blumenthal has determined, for example, that potatoes with 22.5 per cent dry matter are best for making his famous triple fried chips. (He has a set of scales that can measure this.) My wallpaper paste mash was the result of the Magimix's cutting through the starch molecules.

By dint of repetition, copying others and experimentation the humble potato teaches us the nuances of cooking. It measures the fine divide between flab and char, oil's hydrophobia, the necessity of patience, the discipline of timing. We learn the potato's quirks and treacheries, the fine-tuned steps to achieving a golden crust or melting creaminess or the balance between crunch and fluff.

If the potato can give us confidence in the kitchen, it can show us other worlds, too. Indian spice to aloo gobi, croquettes to Japanese korokke fried with panko and dipped in tonkatsu sauce. It is universal, it is tolerant of others. Is there anything a potato won't get on with? Rummage through the fridge and the cupboard for endless possibilities: spice them with nigella seeds and cumin, turn them bright yellow with turmeric, mash them with chilli. I took my two potatoes and boiled them in chicken stock. I stirred in crème fraîche and sprinkled with parsley and hot piment d'Espellete. I don't know if what I made was a stew or a soup, a side dish or lunch—but it tasted good. Warming, restorative. To be tired of potatoes is to be tired of life.

Wendell Steavenson is an Associate Editor of Prospect





Barry Smith

Finding the right balance

Why is it so difficult to describe the taste of a wine? You are in no doubt that you are experiencing the wine you are tasting. So why do its aromas and flavours elude your attempt to capture them in words?

Partly, because a lot happens during tasting. The experience is fleeting, making it hard to concentrate on; though we are usually left with a firm impression of liking or disliking, a sense of surprise or disappointment; and it is these hedonic reactions to which people first give voice. But what comes before that step, and why should it be so hard to pin down the taste of a wine?

Timing is an issue with tasting, and with practice it is possible to see it not as a single event but as a dynamic series of events, and attend to the initial attack as the wine enters the mouth, the persistent or short finish, and in between, the mid-palate. Wine-makers deploy a small but precise vocabulary when tasting, mostly designed to help them pick out faults. This is very far from the poetry that a wine lover seeks. Moreover, exclusive focus on particular qualities of acidity or tannin can interfere with one's ability to appreciate a wine as a whole. To reacquaint ourselves with it we must relinquish attention to the parts and appreciate the flavour of the whole.

But how should we describe its flavour? The difficulty of capturing what we experience may be due to perceiving a composite object. So describing a wine is like describing a face. We know what the people we see look like, just as we know what the wine in our glass tastes like, but we are poor at describing both. However, while we have the ability to recognise faces, nature didn't endow us with a similar ability when it comes to wine. To acquire that skill requires effort and repeated exposure to different wines so that we learn to group according to grape characteristics. Such groupings lead to expectations about the typical characteristics a Sauvingnon Blanc or Cabernet Franc should have. Words for these characteristics—grassy, leafy, plummy—can be shared but they pick out just one dimension of the wine's flavours.

Fruity is the word most commonly reached for by beginners. But which fruit? You can achieve greater precision if you ask yourself whether you taste red fruits or black fruits in red wines, and whether it is tropical or orchard fruit you taste in whites. Turning to words for shape or feel, like round or sharp, can help to pin down tastes.

When white wines lack obvious fruit characteristics, wine merchants often reach for the term minerality: recently much-disputed. Described in a new entry in the 4th edition of *The Oxford Companion to Wine* as an imprecise sensory term, there is no agreement about the basis of its use. Some people use it to describe a reductive, flinty odour of struck match due to starving the wine of oxygen in barrels. Others take it to be a slight taste of saline. While others regard it as a mouthfeel. Despite the variety of understandings, minerality is always agreed to be a good thing.

Finally, there are the terms balance and complexity that pick out notable features in a wine recognisable to any drinker. Give anyone a balanced and an imbalanced wine, and they will prefer the former. A wine is balanced if it contains all the requisite parts—fruit, acid, alcohol, perhaps oak and tannin—with no one of these dominating the others. Perceived complexity goes beyond balance, by harmonising many potentially competing elements.

The lack of confidence many feel when asked to describe a wine is often induced by encountering lists of adjectives piled up by wine critics. But when it comes to a great wine there is little we need to say. As fine wine professionals put it, the wine is complete. Barry Smith is Director of the Institute of Philosophy at the Institute of Advanced Studies, University of London

DIY investor



How to get 6 per cent on savings

We British are apparently among the world's worst savers. According to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, the British household savings rate is one of the lowest of the countries the organisation tracks, far behind everyone in Europe except Greece, Denmark and Portugal and also well below the United States, supposedly the world's "consumer of last resort." Our own Office for National Statistics reported this year that the UK savings rate is now 4.9 per cent, back within a whisker of the low it reached just before the financial crisis.

That's hardly surprising, considering that wages for most people have gone nowhere for years and the rewards you can expect for putting money on deposit are all but invisible. Why bother when you'll be lucky to get 1.25 per cent interest? Arguably, it is official policy to persuade people not to save—spending and borrowing are the prescription to perk up our economy.

This is all well and good but sometimes saving is the only option. If, like us, you can see the time when children will need a chunk of money to help pay for university or training, the only approach is to save some cash.

But where? Today's interest rates make saving a slog; more like running uphill than jogging down with a helpful wind at your back. Now that we are embarking on this exercise for ourselves, I've been thinking more about how to approach it and alongside a deposit account I plan to put some of the money into shares in a number of investment trusts that have started appearing on the stock market. These lend money via online peer-to-peer (P2P) platforms that are mainly based in the UK and the US and offer typical yields in the 6-8 per cent range.

Returns this high do not come without risks, of course, and many others will prefer to keep to safer waters. The share prices of these trusts can fluctuate above and below the nominal value of the basket of loans they hold. Buying when they are trading above their "net asset value" is obviously more risky. Similarly, it is likely that a lot more shares in trusts like these will be offered in the coming years, which could depress prices if demand is weak. Plus, of course, the whole area of P2P lending has yet to be tested in crisis conditions, during which the shares could become difficult to sell, at least temporarily.

These are all solid arguments for caution, quite apart from the practical problem that dealing costs will eat into returns. On the plus side, however, these trusts offer an easy way to diversify across a large number of loans to different types of borrower, and can be held in a stocks and shares ISA.

They are far from risk-free, but risk-free these days tends to mean return-free as well. As investors, we have to bear a higher degree of risk than was necessary a few years ago. It's an inconvenient fact of life, but a fact nonetheless. For me, the risks are acceptable given that the first of four calls on the money won't be until 2023 and we will average out the price of our purchases over the next decade and a half.

But it is a pretty complicated way of saving up some money for your offspring. Sadly, saving has become much harder since the crisis: small wonder that we seem to struggle with it.

Andy Davis is Prospect's investment columnist



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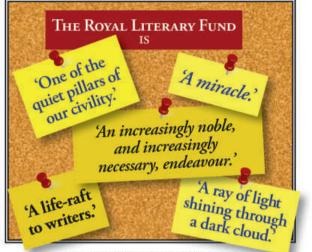


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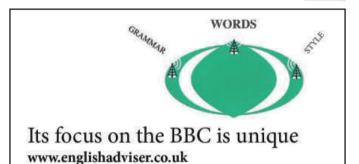
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Last month's generalist crossword and Word Quiz solutions

Figure it ou

One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest, Two can play ay that game, Seven Brides for Seven Brothers, Eight furlongs in a mile, Ten green bottles hanging on the wall, Thirteen – unlucky for some, Sweet sixteen and never been kissed, Twenty-two yards in a cricket pitch, Thirty-two degrees Fahrenheit at which water freezes, Two hundred pounds for passing "go" in Monopoly

Three of an at times fanciful kind!

Inverness-shire, Ross-shire, cross swords, bee-eater, to ooze, egg-glass, Matt Taylor ("sounds like "matt tailor"), wall-lights, sea aardvark, cliff face

Word search

1) catchphrase, 2) calmness, 3) handkerchief, 4) withdrawal, 5) outswinger, 6) snapdragon, 7) kittiwake, 8) neighbourhood, 9) naphtha, 10) jackdaw

Five of a kind

1) The Pentateuch, 2) five livery companies of the City of London, 3) Latin names for species of trees, 4) Scottish lochs, 5) anagrams which yield the names of animals in French (brébis, chien, lapin, lièvre, ours), 6) forenames of five current or recent actresses in Neighbours, 7) counties whose abbreviated form is also an English word 8) words which include three consecutive letters of the alphabet

Vowel play

Abstemious, Uncomplimentary, Fiona Bruce, Euphoria, Cauliflower, Tambourine, Subordinate, Ambidextrous, Regulation, Cautioned

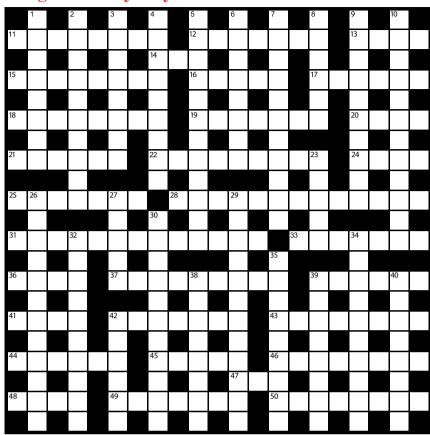
The grids on the right show the solutions to our January issue generalist crossword puzzle. The grids were placed in the correct positions on the page as LEFT can be read along the top row of the solution in the LH grid, and RIGHT is similarly revealed in the RH grid. Turn to page 87 for more details, to find out who won, and for this month's game.

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PROSPECT FEBRUARY 2016 87

The generalist by Didymus



- 11 Capital of the state of Carabobo in Venezuela (8)
- 12 Bearberry (3-4)
- 13 A grim, threatening appearance (4)
- 14 French département, capital Toulon (3)
- 15 Lacking front teeth (8)
- 16 South-east London suburb described in 1848 as "the prettiest of pretty suburbanities" (5)
- 17 Its counties include Clackamas, Deschutes and Multnomah (6)
- 18 One of which, at London Zoo, was designed by and named after Lord Snowdon (8)
- 19 Former name of the holy city Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh (7)
- 20 Forename of the film director of Exodus and Hurry Sundown
- 21 In Scottish law, a civil wrong (6)
- 22 Brownish-red semi-precious gemstone or a "cherry" plant of the dogwood family (9)
- 24 A non-clergyman (4)
- 25 Hinders progress (7)
- 28 Tsar and Emperor of Russia from 1721 (5,3,5)
- 31 Follower of L. Ron Hubbard's religious sect (13)
- 33 Highland area; its Seven Men accompanied Bonnie Prince Charlie from France in 1745 (7)

- 36 A legato effect, in music (4)
- 37 Sea, the deepest point of which is the Cayman Trench at 25,197
- 39 Jahangir Khan's and Heather McKay's sport (6)
- 41 Name by which the Standard Oil Company of New Jersey in best known (4)
- 42 Mustard's rank in Cluedo (7)
- 43 Forename of the founder of the Women's Franchise League in
- 44 Archaic term for a bank or shore (6)
- 45 Capital location of the Namsan Tower and the Changdeokgung Palace (5)
- 46 Renegade to one's principles
- 47 Forename of the songwriter of "Fascinating Rhythm" and "I Got Rhythm" (3)
- 48 Pseudonym adopted by Addison for many of his papers in the Spectator (4)
- 49 The outer coat of an ovule (7)
- 50 Mr Bentley's biographical satirical verse (8)

DOWN

- 1 Brandy (3,2,3)
- 2 French classical dramatist who wrote Phèdre and Britannicus
- 3 Follower of the doctrine of the nominalist schoolman who

- died c. 1349 (8)
- 4 Bag for carrying oats to feed a
- 5 Ovoid watch from Bavaria (9,3) 6 Wisdom (8)
- 7 Vendors of fruit grown in fields
- 8 Members of East African tribes living on the upper reaches of the world's longest river (6)
- 9 Relating to manual workers (4-6) 10 Appearing from nothing at all,
- suddenly (3,2,4,3) 23 Precedes León in a Mexican
- state (5)
- 26 Cheshire silk-making town where Joy Division's Ian Curtis grew up and died in 1980 (12)
- 27 A short sword (5)
- 29 Japanese flowers with trumpetshaped white fragrant blossoms (6,6)
- 30 Like holders of two or more offices concurrently (11)
- 32 Title bestowed on Sir Anthony Eden in 1961 (4,2,4)
- 34 Twofold facial feature (6,4)
- 35 The state of someone dving without having made a will (9)
- 38 Easy-going nature -- like a London auction house, we hear! (8)
- 39 Botham's and Trescothick's county cricket team (8)
- 40 West Indian drink of diluted and sweetened wine (8)
- 42 Costing little and invariably tatty (6)

Last month's generalist solutions

A Alekhine, Amaryllis; B Babiche, Braintree; C Cabriolet, Chansons; D David Ricardo, Dionne; E Erato, Extine; F Ferry, Flawn; G Gauleiter, Gottfried; H Hesperus, Hoosgows; I Imran Khan, Isfahan; J Jeux d'Eau, Judas window; K Kelsall, Kirkcaldy; L Lallan, Legatissimo; M Metcalfe, Myelin; N Nathemo, Nef; O Obolus, Oeil-de-boeuf; P Polemical, Psychic; Q Queaches, Queen; R Rhett, Riese; S Sarsen, Scarificator; T Tulchan, Tux; U Ukases, Unmarry; V Vansittartism, Vireo; W White Hart Lane, Wilhelm; X Xenolith, XII; Y Yellowknife, Yenned; Z ZiL, Zwang. You can see the completed grids for our Christmas generalist on page 86.

Enigmas & puzzles

Counting sheep

Barry R Clarke

8	5	9	8	9	5	2	1
1	9	6	8	7	3	4	9
7	2	8	3	6	5	7	4
4	6	1	6	3	7	7	9
9	7	4	5	4	3	6	6
9	5	7	2	5	9	8	1
6	8	2	4	3	5	5	8
3	3	4	7	5	7	5	4

Above is an 8×8 grid of sheep pens with the number of sheep given in each pen. Farmer Jim has found that it is possible to delete two numbers from each row and column, leaving 48 numbers, so that each row and column totals 30.

Can you reproduce the grid after the deletions have been made?

Last month's solution

The treasure is in Venice and the sequence of correct solutions is (c), (c), (a), (a), (b), (c), (a).

Q1 (c) The drummer boy is sad for 40 seconds and happy for 20 seconds. Q2 (c) Only Crumb appears in two false and one true statement. Q3 (a) Let the amount this year be x. Thirty years ago he gave away x + 120 = 196. Q4 (a) Only two possibilities satisfy the conditions and both have Dopey in second place. Q5 (b) Join Dasher and Dancer into one piece, and Donner and Blitzen into another, then there are 4 pieces that can be arranged in 24 ways. Each in a joined pair can be first, so this multiplies 24 by 4. Q6 (c) If the time in question is x years ago then $\hat{H} - x = 2(\hat{I} - 15)$ and I - x = (H + 12)/2. Q7 (a) Let the radius be r. The centres of the balls can be joined into a tetrahedron (triangular base pyramid) with side length 2r. Trigonometry gives the vertical height of the tetrahedron as $2\sqrt{6r/3}$ and 2r must be added for the stack height. So $r = 8/(1 + \sqrt{6/3})$.

How to enter

The generalist prize

The winner receives a copy of Jane Brown: A Lifetime of Looking, the definitive monograph of the legendary British photographer. In over 60 years as a photographer for the Observer, Brown never came back without the shot—earning the nickname "Tenacity Jane." Collected here are more than 200 of her photographs.



Enigmas & puzzles prize

The winner receives a copy of 1956: The World in Revolt, the story of one of the most remarkable years of the 20th century. Simon Hall traces global events, from the rise of Fidel Castro in Cuba to Britain's humiliation over Suez, painting a picture of the epic contests that made 1956 a year that changed the world.



Send your solution to answer@prospect-magazine.co.uk or Crossword/Enigmas, Prospect, 2 Queen Anne's Gate, SW1H 9AA. Include your email and postal address. Entries must be received by 5th February. Winners announced in our March issue.

Last month's winners

The generalist: Peter Gregson, Amersham Enigmas & puzzles: Richard Tabberer, Loughborough Download a PDF of this page at www.prospectmagazine.co.uk 88 PROSPECT FEBRUARY 2016

The way we were

Remaking the Middle East

Extracts from memoirs and diaries, chosen by Ian Irvine

Colonel Richard Meinertzhagen writes in his Middle East Diary 1917-1956:

"It would have been better for our country and perhaps for the world if CM Doughty, [TE] Lawrence and Gertrude Bell had not been such admirable and persuasive writers." Doughty (1843-1926) was the author of Travels in Arabia Deserta, which greatly influenced Lawrence and Bell.

In April 1916, Gertrude Bell arrives in Basra to take up the post of Senior Political Officer. Over the next 10 years she would design the constitution, select the leadership and draw the borders of the new state of Iraq. Nearly 18,000 British troops had just been captured by the Turks after a siege at Kut, 40 miles from Baghdad. She writes to her mother:

"We rushed into the business with our usual disregard for a comprehensive political scheme. We treated Mesopo-

tamia, as if it were an isolated unit, instead of which it is part of Arabia, its politics indissolubly connected with the great and far reaching Arab question...

"Well that's enough of politics. But when people talk of our muddling through it throws me into a passion. Muddle through! Why yes, so we do—wading through blood and tears that need never have been shed."

In August 1920, TE Lawrence writes:

"The people of England have been led in Mesopotamia into a trap from which it will be hard to escape with dignity and honour. They have been tricked into it by a steady withholding of information... Things have been far worse than we have been told...

"How long will we permit millions of pounds, thousands of imperial troops and tens of thousands of Arabs to be sacrificed on behalf of a form of colonial administration which can benefit nobody but the administrators?"

In September 1922, Winston Churchill, Colonial Secretary, writes to David



Gertrude Bell helped to draw up the borders of the new state of Iraq

Lloyd George, the Prime Minister:

"I am deeply concerned about Iraq... I think we should now put definitely, not only to Feisal [the King] but to the Constituent Assembly, the position that unless they beg us to stay and to stay on our own terms in regard to efficient control, we shall actually evacuate before the close of the financial year.

"I would put this issue in the most brutal way, and if they are not prepared to urge us to stay and to co-operate in every manner I would actually clear out... At present we are paying £8m a year for the privilege of living on an ungrateful volcano out of which we are in no circumstances to get anything worth having."

In October 1963, CWR Long, a British diplomat, writes in his memoir:

"The only unpleasant feature of life in Baghdad, detracting from its perfection but adding to its romance, was the political tension. It was palpable.

"My house had a quaint, triangular mezzanine bathroom. Shaving there every

morning, I could immediately tell from the sounds of the city heard through the window whether or not trouble was to be expected. It very often was.

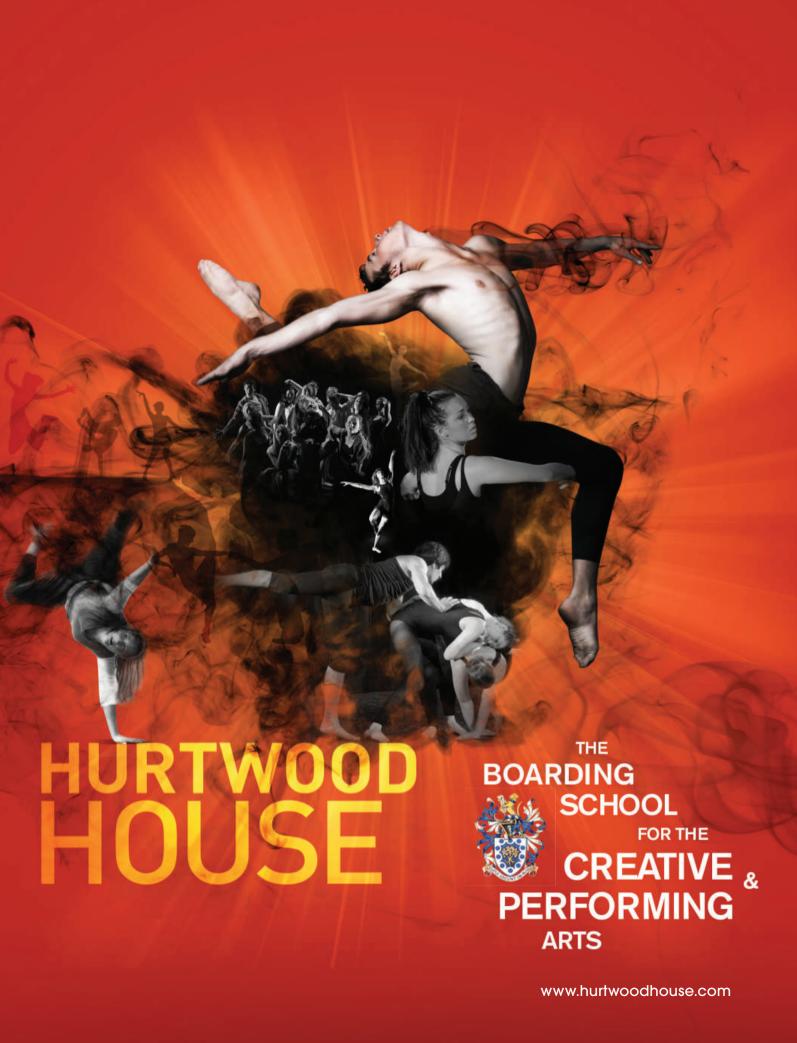
"I had been there no more than three and a half months when a split occurred in the Ba'th government which had been in power since the violent overthrow of the regime of the terminator of the monarchy, Abd al-Karim Qasim. I heard my secretary say 'Oh no, not again.' I heard the sharp crack of machinegun fire far above. An Iraqi Air Force Hawker Hunter flashed silver across the sky and returned to make another attack. This was repeated a couple of times, provoking no answering fire, before quiet returned and the city held its breath. A curfew came down and I and my colleagues had to remain in the Embassy until the middle of the evening until, with typical opti-

mism, the government announced that the affair was over and life had returned to normal. The staff stowed away the camp beds they had been expecting to spend the night on.

In October 2003, Mark Etherington arrives in Kut as Governate Co-ordinator of the Coalition Provisional Authority following the invasion of Iraq.

"It is the unvarying bleakness of much of Irag's southern flatlands that makes the presence of the Euphrates and Tigris rivers... so arresting. Their importance to the country is impossible to exaggerate...

"Perhaps it was this primacy of the elements that had imbued [the Iraqi people] with an innate and fatalistic conservatism, & a quality doubtless compounded by years of persecution under Saddam Hussein. The Iraqis of the region seemed at once to ਛ long for change but were unable to allow themselves the guilty excitement of expecting it... They wanted, I thought, a mirathemselves as part of the solution." P



The right solution, naturally





Trees and woods: multi-purpose tools for policy makers

...housing enhancer...health booster...noise reducer...flood controller...carbon sink... water filter...air cooler...pollution absorber...crop protector...wildlife habitat...



Find out more at **woodlandtrust.org.uk**Email **governmentaffairs@woodlandtrust.org.uk**